fracture

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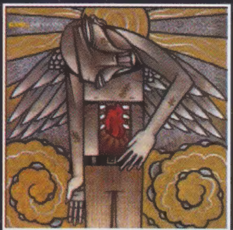

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Plaza
THEATRE

WHISKEY & Co.
"Whiskey & Co."
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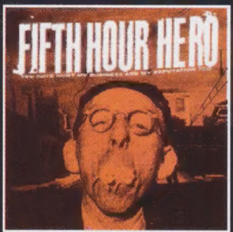
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FIFTH HOUR HERO
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AGAINST ME!
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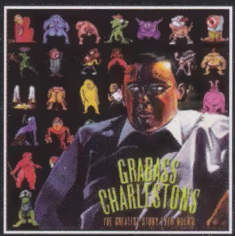
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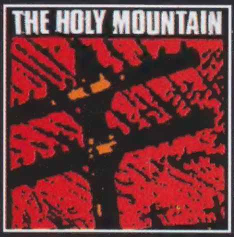
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THE HOLY MOUNTAIN
"Your Face In Decline" 7"

COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN "This is Not..." LP/CD

Bitchin'
Onion Flavored Rings

BITCHIN' & ONION FLAVORED RINGS
split 7"

COLBOM
famous last words e.p.

COLBOM
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7"

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BE NOT CONTENT

TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT
"Be Not Content" LP/CD

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"Put Your Nightlife Where Your Mouth Is"
12"

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from your head to your sacrum

DEADSURE
"From Your Head to Your Sacrum" CD

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NAIL YOURSELF TO THE GROUND

SMALL BROWN BIKE
"Nail Yourself to the Ground" 12"/CD

FIFTH HOUR HERO

FIFTH HOUR HERO
"Scattered Sentences"
LP/CD

AGAINST ME!
AGAINST ME!
REINVENTING AXL ROSE

AGAINST ME!
"Reinventing Axl Rose" LP/CD

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SMALL BROWN BIKE
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GUNMOLL & ANNALISE
split 7"
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BLACKTOP CADENCE
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LP/CD

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ME FIRST & THE GIMME GIMMES
"Stevie" 7"

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS
SPEARHEADING THE SIN MOVEMENT

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS
"Spearheading the Sin Movement" 7"/CDep

Coming up in 2004:

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REHASHER LP/CD *(with Gui from Army of Ponch & Roger from Less Than Jake!)* · STRIKEFORCE DIABLO "Floridian" LP/CD
RUMBLESEAT Discography and then some CD *(first time on CD! Plus several completely unreleased songs!)*
AGAINST ME! "Sink, Florida, Sink" *(electric)* / "Unsubstantiated Rumors" *(electric)* 7" · TRUE NORTH "t/b/a" LP/CD
PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS "t/b/a" LP/CD · J CHURCH "Society is a Carnivorous Flower" LP/CD

fracture

reviewerplaylists

RUSSELL REMAINS >>>

DRIVE BY TRUCKERS : Decoration... CD
INTEGRITY : To Die For CD
TWILIGHT SINGERS : Blackberry... CD
WILLARD G.C. : Regard the End CD
MONDO GENERATOR : A Drug... CD
THIS AIN'T VEGAS : Black Lung... CD
THE ENABLERS : Sweet Fuck All CDEP
TONIC : Head on Straight CD
COUNTING CROWS : Hard Candy CD
Terrorizer : World Downfall CD

ARNOLD THE KITTEN >>>

TSOL : Divided We Stand CD
HOUSE ON FIRE : Self Titled 7"
TURBONEGRO : Live
THE BRIGGS : Numbers CD
TRUE NORTH : Put Your Nightlife... 12"
SMOGTOWN : Everything
BEDFORD FALLS : Practice Tape
CHASING CHAP AROUND THE HOUSE
THE GHOST MICE : Live
NO CHOICE / FIFTH HOUR HERO : Split

PETE CRAVEN >>>

FROM ASHES RISE : Nightmares CD
MIKE V and THE RATS : S/T CD
V/A : Antipodean Screams CD
K-LINE : How You Gonna Scare... CD
MIDNIGHT EVILS : Straight til... CD
REMOVAL : w/ Chi Pig 7"
SEX MANIACS : Mean As Hell CD
RADIO BIRDMAN : Live
ASSCHAPEL : Live
SLAUGHTERHOUSE 57 : Live

HILARY ELLIS >>>

VERMILLION : Flattening Mountains CD
TED LEO : Hearts of Oak CD
SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD... : All... CD
ALKALINE TRIO : Good Mourning CD
WIRELESS STORES : Live
SIXTY STORIES : Anthem Red CD
MATT POND PA : The Nature of Maps CD
SHORTCUT TO NEWARK : Heads... 7"
PAPERBACKS : Episode of Sparrows CD
SENSE FIELD : Live

DAN McKEE >>>

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY : Hee Haw CD
VIZA NOIR : Self Titled CD
SOUNDTRACK FOR "RENT"
RANCID : Indestructible CD
JEFF BUCKLEY : Grace CD
BRUCE MCCULLOCH : Shame... CD
BBC RADIO 4 : The Masterson...
JOHNNY CASH : Solitary Man CD
PJ HARVEY : Stories From The... CD
TERMINUS : Graveyard of Dreams CD

MONK DAVE >>>

ROB COE & ALEX ULLOA : Friends
NRA AND OIL : Their 2003 UK tour
FOUR LETTER WORD : Live
BEDFORD FALLS : Live
ARTCORE FANZINE : Issue 20
MR. ASTON : Consistently damn helpful!
ALL THAT NEW NO IDEA SHIT!
BLOCKO : Self Titled CD
K-LINE : How You Gonna Scare... CD
ALL NEWEST INDUSTRY RELEASES!

DAVID STUART >>>

WEAKERTHANS : New CD and Live
STEPMOTHERS : ...Never My Age LP
SIMPLETONES : I Have a Date LP
RAMESES III : Folk Hymns CD
BROKEN FAMILY : Cold Water... CD
NATHANIEL GREEN : Same Time... CD
SENSEFIELD : Living Outside CD
DUGONG : Hat Danko CD
FLETCHER : My Revenge CD
PONY COLL : Giving Up the Ghost CD

SEAN McKEE >>>

RIGHT BRIGADE : Demo + 1st EP
RISE & FALL : MP3's
LEEWAY : The Enforcer LP
WIVES OF SETH : Demo
THE PROCESS : Rehearsal Tape
NO CHOICE : Dry River Fishing CD
THE LEGACY : Live
CRUMBSUCKERS : Life Of Dreams LP
SPITFIRE DOWN : All I Ever Loved CD
G.S.M.F's : Powerbomb Anthems 10"

TOM WILLECOMBE >>>

WEAKERTHANS : Live
WEAKERTHANS : Reconstruction... CD
GUNMOLL : Board of Rejection CD
THE ENABLERS : Sweet Fuck All CDEP
CHAMBERLAIN : Moon My Saddle CD
BLOCKO : Self Titled CD
THE CARDIGANS : Long Gone... CD
CALEXICO : Feast of Wire CD
RED ANIMAL WAR : Black Fantom... CD
MASHED POTATO

GRAHAM SLEIGHTHOLME >>>

KNIFE FIGHT : Self Titled 7" EP
VIOLENT MINDS : Self Titled 7" EP
DROP DEAD : Live
MELT BANANA : Live
LEAFHOUND : Growers Of Mushroom LP
GERMS : GI LP
KITCHENER : Self Titled 7" EP
KNIFED : Live
SEEIN' RED : Live
INTENSITIY : Live

regulars

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features

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FRACTURE #25

SUSPECT 151272
RUSSELL REMAINS

This wake is long overdue. The final collected words of scene elitism, cliquey in-jokes, patronising bullshit and jaded cynicism is blackening your fingers for the final time. And it feels good.

There is a multitude of reasons why me and Dave mutually agreed to end Fracture and most of them are too complex and ingrained in us to begin to describe, but in the most simple terms, it just doesn't feel 'right' any longer. Fracture has become a stale bed-partner and I'm feeling like I want to fuck someone else. I'll go into this in more depth in my column (possibly, but I have some other shit to settle in it too), but right now Fracture is treading water and is fettered by its own boundaries of what people expect of it. It's time for Brando to keel over and Pacino to take over.

I don't think either of us really expected Fracture to become what it did; we just wanted to prove six years ago that it was possible to produce a 'national' punk zine, and I think our work is now done. Full-time hobbies are no fun when they feel like full-time jobs that pay a zero wage. One thing I know for sure is that when I put pen to paper and jotted down a few rough zine ideas to send to Dave all those years ago; that was one of the best decisions I've ever made. As a great man once said "I wouldn't change a thing if I could live it all again".

There's a train leaving and the horizon looks like a good place to head for right now. I'm on board. Thanks, everyone. I mean it.

Russell Remains, Leeds, Dec '03

Character References:

The time when the very first issue of Fracture was ready at the printers. We took a car down to collect them. A car. Upon arrival we discovered this would be like trying to move a fat elephant on a rollerskate. Numerous trips later the full print run occupied a full room of my house. I sat on one pile and Dave sat on another. We both looked at each other and simultaneously uttered: "oh shit".

The time when I was loading our band gear into a gig and tried to make polite conversation with another of the bands that was playing that night. They made every effort to be as rude as possible and act like jumped-up little rockstar shitfuckers as I loaded the amps and guitars in. I followed the band gear with a good few bundles of Fracture for the stall. Said band suddenly couldn't be nice enough as they regaled me with smoochy questions as to whether their CD had been reviewed yet. Damage, done.

The time when we tried to give a copy of Fracture to a wild monkey on Gibraltar. It took it, flicked through a few pages, flung it aside and then delivered a hell of a right hook to DS with a clenched furry fist.

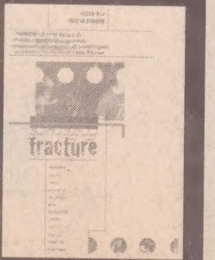
The time when we were on a staff holiday and Monk Dave bought a treasured 'Punky' ice cream with free Mohawked Penguin. Proud as a new father he was. Until Punky got kidnapped and photographs started appearing with random threats to damage Punky's pristine black plastic. Ransom was paid, Punky was returned, albeit frozen with an egg inside him.

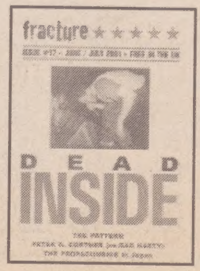
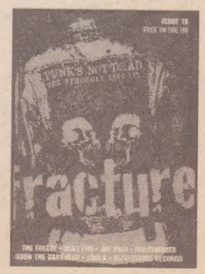
The time when the head of Fracture's Royal Mail depot had to come and pay Monk a visit at home because we kept getting other people's mail put in our box. Including that of the local nazi skinhead band. And British Gas.

The time when I was returning from one of the many trips I made to London in a transit van fully laden with copies of the new issue each time it was printed. Rain was lashing onto the M25 in horizontal sheets as I cruised the fast lane, urging the van forward with a foot to the floor. Until there was a crack like a shotgun to the chest and black smoke billowing in the rearview mirror. The van careered across all three lanes before I brought it to a halt on the hard shoulder. The rear tire had shredded like soft human flesh in a harvesting machine. I knew there and then Fracture may one day be the death of me.

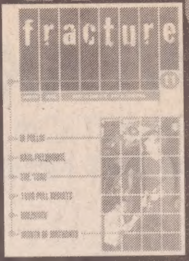
The time when an un-named British band phoned up Monk's parents house at midnight and called his dad a "fucking cunt" because Monk had been naughty and had dared to give them a bad review. Hah.

The time when a bunch of Fracture writers planned a weekend around an all-dayer in London with DISCOUNT headlining. A quiet night before was planned. A 'quiet night' that took in three jugs of Sangria and Long Island Iced Tea, coupled with about 6 or 7 pints each and then washed down with a bottle of Jaegermeister. The following day saw six out of the seven writers vomiting in gutters, drains, toilets and urinals.



They whacked him. They fucking



KNOWN ASSOCIATES:

The following persons contributed to this final issue of Fracture and for this we are eternally grateful. They delivered the shit when it hit the fan.
David Stuart, Steven Scanner, Andy Higgins, Benjamin Smith, Daniel McKee, Trevor HAGL, Timothy Mass Movement, Vique "Porno" Martin, Thomas Craven, Dario Adamic, Sean McKee, Jack Plug, Hilary Ellis, Graham Sleightholme, Melanie Hughes, Thomas Willecombe, Nicholas Albert Tinworth The Third, Gareth Suspect...
Likewise, we throw ourselves in the dirt at the feet of everybody else who has contributed to Fracture over the years - there's a lot of you and we think each and every one of you is sort of okay, in your own special way.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Needless to say, you can get fucked if you think you're getting another copy of Fracture. We're keeping your cash as well to bankroll our habits for silken clothing and Cuban cigars. We will however, also be carrying your subscriptions over to our new fanzine that will be out next year. This fanzine will be fun again. More fun than Fracture, for instance. The subscription rates will still be £10 for 10 issues of the new zine and considering that the print run will be significantly reduced, coupled with the fact that we already have over 500 subscribers, it might be a good idea to subscribe to this one. It won't be flying around like shit at a GG Allin gig. This issue's subscribers also got a free CD courtesy of the sexy fucking beasts at No Idea Records. Play loud, be proud.

DISTRIBUTION:

Fracture is kindly distributed in the UK in bulk by these champions of industry : All Ages Shop (London), Out of Step Shop (Leeds) and The Punker Bunker (Brighton).

We are also distributed to mainland Europe by Southern UK and in the USA by No Idea (see www.noidearecords.com to order single copies). You can also pick copies up in Independent Outlet (Amsterdam) and various other shops and venues across the UK. These people have been good to us over the years, so show respect.

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DISCLAIMER: All views and opinions published in Fracture are solely those of the author and are in no way representative of everyone at Fracture. Just because we've printed something does not necessarily mean we agree with it. And trust me, we won't do it again. Not in Fracture anyway.

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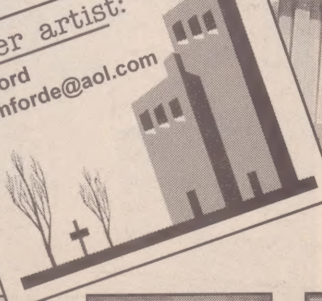

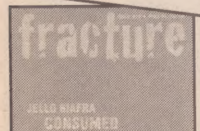

SUSPECT 301174
MONK DAVE

So that's it then, the UK's "answer to Maximum Rock'n'Roll" has finally met its maker(s). This is not a sad day though, as it had to happen. Sometimes things need to change so that stagnation does not set in, and this is exactly what we're going to do.

It is indeed impossible to explain just exactly why we felt the need to kill Fracture off like an unassuming dinner guest in an episode of "Murder, She Wrote", but let's just say that "many things" (including some never-ending money issues) have ushered in our mildly unexpected demise. But, as you can probably guess, in the true spirit of "DIY or Die", this is by no means the end. Just as Mad Monks and Charred Remains fanzines amalgamated into the beast that was Fracture six years ago, so Fracture will do the same - transform and move on. There's life in the old dog yet - it's just that we've decided to get a cat instead.

And you know sometimes how your favourite band just keeps on churning out records that seem to get worse and worse as time goes on? And you secretly wish they had all died in a plane crash after their best album, so their reputation could have stayed in tact, and it would then be okay to have their logo tattooed on your arm? Well that's how we feel about Fracture. Die in a plane crash, or break-up and form a new band. A different band with a new name and a new approach. Sounds like a good idea, right?

We must, however, make damn well sure we do not reform in 20 years time just to play "Holidays In The Sun"...

Monk Dave, Cardiff, Dec '03

whacked him. I can't fucking believe it

THE WEAKERTHANS

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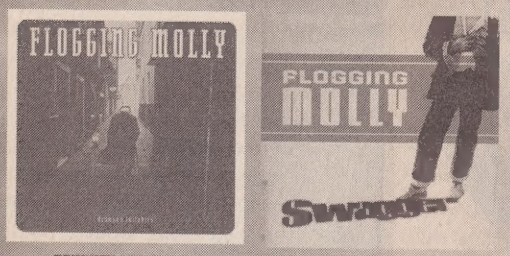
FLOGGING MOLLY



DRUNKEN LULLABIES SWAGGER

05.11 Oxford - Zodiac - UK
06.11 Glasgow - Garage - UK
07.11 London - ULU - UK
08.11 Liverpool - Academy 3 - UK
09.11 Manchester - Hope & Grape - UK
11.11 Portsmouth - Wedgewood room - UK

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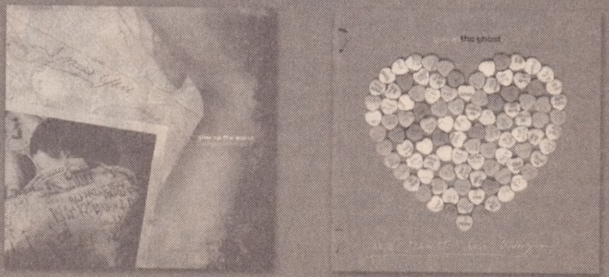
give up the ghost

ALBUMS OUT ON BURNING HEART!



background music we're down til we're underground

26.11 Newport - TJs - UK
27.11 Derby - Victoria Inn - UK
28.11 Birmingham - Edwards No8 - UK
29.11 Leeds - Josephs Well - UK
30.11 Brighton - Freebutt - UK
01.12 London - Underworld - UK

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COPACETIC
with David Stuart

"A Quiet Night Before the Big Day"

Friday Afternoon. I finished work at mid-day and spent the afternoon chilling out and waiting for Mr Remains to hit the town sometime early evening. This was the day before Nic Jevad's wedding to the gorgeous Kate from Colorado.

I call Russell around 6pm to see where he's at on the A1, that drive (Leeds to Cambridge) can be achieved in 2 1/2 hours on a good day, but Friday afternoons can be hell. *"Hey Russell - how's tricks, where you be my man?"*

"DS, I was just about to call you, I have a problem. I've lost my wallet and I'm halfway down the A1!" He'd left it in a health food store in Leeds - perfect! *"Well, I can lend you the cash for the weekend, but... how much petrol do you have?" "Shit! Under a quarter of a tank and I'm the Scottish side of Nottingham"* - whoops!

After getting a family member to pay for petrol over the phone, Russell continues his journey and shows up in Cambridge around 8:30pm. No sooner is his shit outta the car and his piss outta his bladder, we're off into town aboard a luxurious Ford mini cab. We arrive at the infamous King Street Run bar, our mission, a chilled out evening, a *"quiet one"* as it were. So we begin to have a *"quiet one"* and sink a few beers at a leisurely pace. Then a friend shows up, she's on a gals night out and has popped in to try and drag us to a club. *"We can't go, we have to be up early to catch a train to London at 10am so we can't go crazy", "No fucking pussy excuses, you're all coming to a club"* - cue minutes of arguing back and forth. In the end we agree to "follow" her to the club, the plan being, she goes in, we bail. Goodnight and some other time sweetheart. We stand across the road from the club. There is a long queue... I know from experience, this queue moves slower that a slime-free snail on a gravel pathway in mid-August. We just hang out until someone suggests the indie club that's on that night... for some inexplicable reason we head for it. Resigned to staying out later than intended. We did the club, we went to a friend's house afterwards... then we went back to my house... we may have been drunk.

The Wedding Day. I awoke at 8:30am... approximately four hours after stumbling in off my tits. Hangover? That would be a polite way of saying it. I went next door to wake Russell, oh boy... we were a mess. We sat and talked for a while, Russell so happy to have woken up with a girl's phone number printed on a piece of crumpled paper. Me less than happy to be experiencing aches on my upper arm and back... then I remembered the fight. Talking to this, er, how do we say this in the age of political correctness? *"Generously proportioned lady"*... in every department. We were just drunkenly arguing... she hit me hard on the arm. I told her I almost felt that. She hit me again. I told her not to bother as I feel no physical pain. She hits me one more time. I told her to stop or I would hurt her with this... and raised my index finger. She said *"What the fuck are you talking about?"* so I flicked one of her chins. It hurt. Then we exchanged punches. No big deal... until the morning, I do feel physical pain after all.

We were scheduled to catch a train around 10:00am, but I was in no fit state to move out of the bathroom, let alone sit in a sweaty carriage full of general public retard-ness with my monkey suit on. I knocked back plenty of mineral water and couple of cans of Red Bull. By mid-day I was good to go, but had to drive. Time was against us now, fuck it, I wasn't going to drink today anyway... not after last night and the way I felt that morning. We set off into the sun, London bound. Feeling better, but nowhere near good. The drive was a nightmare, every red light, every possible delay... it was a conspiracy. I decided to park in a safe area and grab a cab to Hampstead. This didn't work, there were no cabs available for 40 minutes and the time was twenty to ceremony. Fuck! We jumped back in the car, drove across to Hampstead and parked behind a big old abandoned pub right on the edge of the Heath. We ran to the church, we got there late. The bride's car was outside, nothing or nobody else was. Then one of the ushers came out and called us in... we ran into the church foyer, past the bride and entourage who were getting ready to take that walk, into the church... speed-walking down the aisle, everyone looking at us in expectancy, but it wasn't for us. We grabbed a pew... then we died. The hangover, that bastard dehydrating, headache inducing son of a motherfucker had reared it's ugly head again. We were out of breath, hotter than a whore's handbag with temple veins throbbing like a Scanner (of the David Cronenberg variety, not the computer hardware). The sweat, man I was dripping onto the concrete floor like a faulty faucet. I felt nauseous, fucking terrible if the truth be known. I thought it was just me, then I turned and looked at Russell... it felt so good to know that I wasn't alone in this hell. The ceremony was perfect, I remember that. Then it was over... outside, fresh air, no hymns and no choir.

We played the part, throwing rose petals at the happy couple, making pleasantries, socialising and being part of the celebration of wedlock. I'd decided to drive to the reception, alcohol was the last thing I wanted today... so we started to say our *"goodbyes"* and *"see ya in a bit"* spiel and started walking to the car. Not so fucking fast! No, no, no... we couldn't do that. There were three double-decker buses laid on to take everyone to the reception with champagne being served en route. So we got on the first bus, upper deck, blazing sunshine heating the vehicle like a sauna and sat there struggling to maintain decorum. Then we set off, I hesitantly accepted a flute of champagne... this could be a problem I thought. It went down, I had another... then another. Miraculously I started feeling much more human again, engaging in conversation and talking to folk I hadn't seen in a while. By the time we reached the designated venue I was up to speed. In the reception hall we were greeted with more champagne flutes and somewhere down the line all thoughts of getting the car were lost. It was a great day, lots of friends, all dressed up like penguins and Las Vegas whores. The drink was free all day, everyone was smashed... many moments of madness, Joe Maples coming over to our table, crushing Russell's dessert, then swigging from a bottle in his hand, not realising he had another in the same hand and pouring it all over himself. Then falling over, I scooped him up and carried him outside. Joe was last seen that night face down in the gravel after throwing beer bottles at strangers... bless him. Wrestling with Moon from OTHERWISE, picking him up, falling over, hearing a large ***"Crack!"*** "You OK?" "Er, yeah, I think so" "I'm fine too...I thought we'd broken something there" then carrying on... only to be told a week later that he'd possibly cracked a rib and had been off work since. Lots of cool folks, friends old and new... shows how clued up I am with *"the scene"* though, cuz when this pretty girl introduced herself to me as *"Alex, from Bombed Out Records"* I just looked and said; *"Oh, I thought you were a bloke"* - smooth as glass. The remainder of the day is a bit of a blur though, but I do remember the Cuban cigars, very nice.

There had to be a nightmare in

the day at some point and indeed there was. At the day's end we got a cab to a friend's apartment where we were crashing over. But twenty minutes into the stay and I had to get out. So I did... my car was parked in a place that is locked at 6am so I figured I'd walk to the car, move it out onto the private road thus not breaking any laws, and sleep until dawn. So I left the apartment, fairly confident that I knew how to walk the three miles or so to the car. I can't recall that walk at all! As I got to where the car was parked I noticed an abundance of activity. There were couples everywhere, walking out of the woods, strolling along... it seemed unusually busy for 3am on a Sunday morning. Then I realised they were all men. Shit, I realised I'd parked my car in the prime cottaging area of Hampstead Heath... I'd joked about this in the day *"I'll probably get back to the car to find two guys shagging on the hood"* and *"Look at all that birdshit on my car... wait a minute, that's not birdshit"*. Oh how my humour came back to haunt me. I walked into the car park expecting to find my car either clamped, locked in, burned out or at the very best on it's lonesome. It wasn't... it was surrounded by about twenty other cars and lots of men. As I walked to my car I saw there was a guy leaning on it. *"Excuse me pal, lay off the car"* and he jumped up, said sorry then asked me my name. I didn't answer and got straight in the car, started it up and drove onto the private road and then cut the engine, zapped the central locking from the inside, reclined the seat and slept. I woke up to daylight with a blinding headache. It was 8am and I set off for Cambridge, possibly not the brightest thing to do as I had drunk an awful lot the day before. But I just had to get into my own bed and sleep so I set off. Hour or so later I'm in Cambridge, straight into bed and sleep came immediately. I awoke around mid-day... at first unsure of where I was. Then I turned my phone on and was immediately hit with a barrage of missed calls, voice mails and texts. One from Russell *"Hi DS, just went to find the car, it's not there, I haven't got my glasses and can't see very well, but I'll try to get the train to Cambridge."*

Shit, I'd forgotten about Russell! So I got in contact with him, he was halfway to Cambridge on a train... I felt terrible. I then had to call back a few other folks who were concerned about my disappearance. All very embarrassing I have to say. So I picked Russell up from the station, went back to mine, ate some lunch... he then set off for Leeds, no doubt vowing never to return. I went to bed for the remainder of the day, thinking back on what a great event Nic & Kate's wedding had been. Thanks guys - all the best for the future.

The Finest Fuck...

Shame About the Guilt and Regret.

8:30am... walking to work, a little hungover, a little depressed and in my own world. Hair still wet from my morning shower. I put the key in the lock of the building, it doesn't turn, wait a minute, the door is unlocked... I slide the heavy goods-in door across quietly and discover the lights are on. Someone's here already? There were no cars outside and no one should be here for another hour. I walk to the back of the building, not hearing a sound. I see the kitchen light is on so I walk on in. She's there... *"Hi DS, do you want a coffee?" "Yeah, sure... what are you doing here so early?", "I wanted to talk to you man, about last night, that was pretty intense".* It had been. We'd ran into each other at a pub, I was with my friends, she was with hers. Her friends left, she stayed. We talked, my friends left, we stayed and we talked. Then we left, stumbled to the train station, my destination northbound, hers southbound. We said goodbye, we hugged, she said *"DS you rule, I'll see you in the morning"*, then she kissed me, innocently, out of friendship, we stood back, looked at each other... both realising a line had been crossed, albeit in a drunken haze. We stared at each other, then she snapped us out of the dream sequence by hitting my arm and saying *"Goddamn alcohol!"* turned and walked for her train. I caught my train, went home. I slept and dreamed.

"Forget about it, we were a little drunk", I said, feeling a little embarrassed and awkward. *"You think we should? I didn't sleep last night, just kept thinking about it"* she replied. *"I know what you're saying, I spent all night dreaming about you"* - Wrong answer, sometimes it's better to think before you speak and hold back the truth. *"Let's do it man, here, now... fuck it, you want to?"* I turned red and I could feel the blood pumping throughout my veins, a nervous tremor charging through my body. *"Right now? Like upstairs?"* - why was I saying these words? What was I thinking? Guess I wasn't. We hurried up the stairs, went to a dark corner and started kissing ferociously and running our hands over each other. I lifted her tight fitting t-shirt up and pulled it over her head, unfastened her bra and took her breasts out of their cups... she wriggled out of her tight jeans as I unfastened the buttons on mine and pulled them down to my knees, losing my shorts in the movement. No foreplay, just desperate animal instinct, unbridled passion... losing it. In another world, fucking this girl after months of flirting, sexual innuendo and, in my own mind (not sure about hers), fantasies. We were good together, those *out there* fantasies brought to life, in reality, as good as the dreams... better. Those breasts, only ever seen through t-shirts, holstered and un-holstered. I knew what they would look like, how they would feel... but man, oh man, they (she) blew my mind.

She sat on the edge of the worktop, put her legs around me and drew me closer. I invited myself in, she was a lot tighter than my girlfriend, even dripping velvet wet, it was a lot more sensual than I was used to, which, in the situation, just wasn't necessary as our one position embrace lasted no longer than three minutes... maybe less, I don't know, but it was the best sex I'd ever had, I'd had some good sex too, but this was secret, illegal, wrong... but oh, so right, so (adult) fairytale, so perfect. She was quite literally my dream girl and the dream had become a reality. I'd never felt this close and intimate to anyone before, never felt so *"as one"*... I could feel my passion rising so I thrust myself deep into her for one last time and as I climaxed we were still kissing and just looking into each other's eyes... I collapsed to my knees... a spent force, she came down with me, kissing my neck and my ear... we held each other for several minutes, shaking, sweating and breathing hard. As we slowly recovered we re-dressed ourselves in silence. *"Wow"* I muttered, the only thing I could say. We made our way downstairs in silence, there were no words to say. I went to my office, she went to hers, I sat at my desk, logged on and started work in a bizarre reality. Ten minutes later work colleagues started to show up... another day, the same old same old all over again... kinda.

A couple of hours later I was checking something in the warehouse and she walked around the corner... that knowing smile beaming directly at me. *"You OK?" "Yeah, I'm good, real good... crazy shit huh?"* We arranged to go on our lunch break at the same time to talk about things. I got to the pub first, ordered a double JD in the raw and a pint of 1664. I then went to my favoured table and started reading my book (a James Lee Burke novel if I remember correctly). I read a chapter, not taking any of it in. She showed up, bought a pint of Guinness and came and sat opposite me at the small table. We started to talk, candidly. She had a boyfriend (or was it a husband?)

and I was in a long-term relationship, what had we done? What were we gonna do? But just talking to her, I was becoming aroused... not listening to her words but watching that perfect mouth in motion. I wanted her again, so I just told her so. She smiled and we talked about the night before and what had happened that morning. She had to get the next round of drinks in because I was in no physical condition to stand. Looking at her, looking the pool table and thinking bad things... good, very good, but bad, bad, bad things.

We spent the next few weeks fucking whenever we could, before work, lunch-breaks and after work at my house, even in the toilets of an East End club while the headlining band strutted their stuff in front of three hundred people the other side of the wall. Eventually we came to the realization that it couldn't go on. It was too risky, too out of control and we couldn't afford to get caught out... yep, guilt had gotten the better of us both. So we stopped seeing each other. At work we'd be the same as ever, in the pub after work with our work-mates, no-one knew. We'd gotten away with it. It was over. I left that job a couple of months later. For other reasons, but I knew I had to get away as I couldn't get her out of my head and it was so difficult seeing her every day and not being able to touch her.

I didn't see her for a few months after I left and then I ran into her at a bar before a show. We sat together, talked for a while and then her man showed up, we exchanged pleasantries and then I drank up and left. Didn't see her at the show, haven't seen her since. I still think about her every once in awhile mind you, the sexiest girl I have ever met without a doubt. It makes me feel guilty, but regretful? That first fuck will stay in my memory until the end. It was perfect, and although wrong, how can I ever regret that experience? Fuck, I need a cold shower... or maybe just a wee wank in memory of... ha, like I'd tell you guys!

And So It Ends...

I've opened up my heart and soul on many occasions during my time writing for this magazine. Sometimes to ridicule, but more often than not to the most incredible, open and rewarding communication I have experienced during my life sentence to punk rock. I wish to thank all of those who have read my shit, hated it, enjoyed it and commented on it... that feedback has been a lifeline at times and just great fun other times.

One of the major positives about Fracture has been the friends I have made, sure I've always made friends from the writing I have done for other zines over the years, but the sheer volume and distribution of FRACTURE has meant I've had the opportunity to meet a lot of new folks, a lot of those have become very, very good friends to me over recent years. Fracture will end, but hopefully those friendships will stay... I have faith in that.

I offer a salute... to friends, near and far away... the experiences, the smiles... long may they continue. I thank God that I found you all.

David Stuart.
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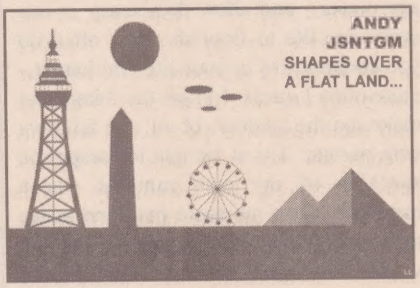


A Splurge of Consciousness

A lot of water has passed under the proverbial bridge of life since my last column in Fracture. I have been pretty busy ... attending some great gigs, being made redundant and subsequently re-employed (yawn), publishing issue 5 of Blackpool Rox II fanzine and now working diligently on issue 6, studio recording sessions with Sick 56, a few local Higgins ++ gigs, getting things sorted for the next 2 releases on the JSNTGM label, a football trip to Macedonia, hours sorting out the JSNTGM website in "MSbollocks" front page, loads of football (playing and watching), typing up interviews for this issue of Fracture, lots of good new reading material, and most recently trying to get the Jello Biafra spoken word date fixed up at Blackpool Football Club (Nov 1st). So with all this going on what on earth should I write about for the good readers of Fracture ? ... well amidst all this racing around and keeping many plates spinning at any one time, a few recurring themes have been playing on my mind which I believe are worthy of inclusion, so today my Fracture reading friend I shall focus on : the **myth of democracy** ; why everything seems to **become a machine** ; and the parallels between early punk rockers and a modern day marginalised group called **football hooligans**.

Democracy, first described by Aristotle and the even earlier Greeks (Plato and Socrates), detailed and championed by John Stuart Mill in his liberal teachings of the mid 1800's , and much vaunted by just about every recent political leader from pretty much every "liberal" country in the world, is one of the most important concepts which our human consciousness holds. Democracy is often hailed as the basis of Western civilisation and our modern day political systems, and it is something which is believed to be so right in some quarters, that it is our unalienable duty to export it and try to impose it on unenlightened foreign lands. The talk of democracy in politics, in a court-room, or even amongst groups of friends or in a family summons up a concept of even handedness, a sense of fair play, an idea of everybody's voice being heard. It is regarded as a tool that can be used to overcome stalemate, to help people arrive at a fair decision , and something to prevent any one individual from bullying and getting his own way all the time. So with all these practical benefits, should we not just accept that democracy is a good thing ? Well allow me to dig a little deeper, and see if you share any of my concerns.

Democracy is a simplistic notion, that is rarely used for what it is intended, and hardly ever used in any areas where it could really make any difference. Let me illustrate. On a Monday morning in a room of 100 people, if 51 people vote for the other 49 to be executed on the spot this is democratic - not good maybe , but democratic nonetheless.

If on the previous Sunday evening however, a majority voted that no motions should ever be tabled that would actually endanger the human rights of any members of the group (i.e. execution), should Mondays vote even take place? If the group changed their mind about Sunday's democratic decision, and decided they wanted to overturn it and have a vote on the execution of colleagues, then that is that more democratic than standing by Sunday's decision? Wouldn't you agree? (Commons v Lords thing) So on Monday if the vote for execution is carried and 49 are sentenced to death, what if when they are all lined up against the wall awaiting the firing squad to squeeze their triggers, one of the 51 pro executioners suddenly changes his mind (making it a 50/50 even vote) and calls for the execution to stop? Should it stop? What if the remaining 50 of the original 51 executioners oppose this action by pointing to the fact, that the turncoat will now have to table a new motion to overturn Monday's decision to go ahead with the execution, and that cannot be heard until next Wednesday when in fact the execution is scheduled for Monday afternoon. - What should happen then? Again... What if 49 of the remaining , now 50 pro-executioners, all suddenly think "shit it's a big mistake, lets all change our minds" and postpone the execution..... but the remaining 1 pro executioner points out that overturning this decision would invalidate their little democracy, and contravene their age old rule (which 100 of them voted for last Friday) that all democratic decisions taken by their group cannot be changed until the following days forum?

What I am trying to depict with this muddled example is that the practical application of democracy is in itself pretty complicated, it is all based around rules of what can and cannot be done. Everything needs to be seen in black and white terms when in reality (as Bob Mould sang on Something I Learned Today off Zen Arcade) " black and white is always grey" , means that things as black and white as democracy are oft destined for unworkability.

Look at the practical applications throughout modern history and at large in the world today. The 2 republics in Germany and Italy spawning Hitler and Mussolini in the 1930's were both born out of so called democratic regimes. The instability of the democratic processes giving rise to rampant factionalism is cited as a major reason for the downfall of the political regimes in both countries. Today the highly undemocratic UN Security council needs their inner sanctum of 5 all to back or oppose a motion before it does or doesn't happen. So all parties vote against war besides one, war still happens - how democratic. All countries vote to stop war - but it still continues ... mmm a good advert for democracy in action ? I think not. I know this opens another bigger question of the U.N having or not having teeth, but it does illustrate how the UN is not democratic. The UK cabinet has historically always been based around a distilled version of block voting i.e. nowadays it's the Blairites and the "others" on pretty much all issues. Fall out with Blair and become marginalized or vote with him on matters that you oppose to help your career ? Democracy does not apply, and integrity is quashed below self interest ? I guess every other cabinet, inner sanctum , war committee was, is and will be pretty much the same. Believe me this is not a criticism of politicians, more the human condition - the consciousness in which we are all caught up. We cannot think and act out any better or higher at this stage in our development, so you and I would probably fare no better than our so called leaders, should we be catapulted into their position. So from Wilson to Thatcher, from George Washington to George Bush, most decisions "made" by a group tend to be based around the main figure and his/her advisors ... the rest will just tend to go along for their own reasons ... and the irony of it all is, is this is exactly how the architects of these democratic institutions always intended it to be !! Why would they ever create these institutions such as the U.N., the Government if it would mean they had to give their power away !!

My thesis is based on what I see, experience and understand. Even drilling down to the DNA of everyday life, most of us are too bundled up with our ego and selfish desires to relinquish any power - and allow democracy in our every day life to flourish. How often do you compromise in your life and hate it - quite often I guess. I know the things that make me the maddest of all, are fall outs with partner. Try as I might to escape the shackles of my own mindset, these instances cause me more pain and anger than everything else going on in the world. Not right, not humanitarian, not clever ... but the way it is. We all have our own journeys and possible destinations, until we overcome the ego and get real honest I can't see democracy working on a personal or wider level.

So one useful point I would like to make is that very rarely will anyone enjoying power easily give it up. When I say enjoying power I mean everything from an individual having the upper hand in a personal relationship, to being a wealthy business individual in part controlling the destinies of employees, or even a "powerful" politician which the right to manage and sway opinion to affect lots of people's lives.

For instance in your own relationships one partner might get their way more often than the other. Perhaps the other party is happy to compromise and acquiesce, or perhaps they are just happy not to oppose for fear of the consequences - (*being in a one sided relationship is better than losing the relationship*). You might be too frightened to try and get yourself heard and your feelings registered, for fear of what you might lose. *How would the other react when I suggest they are overpowering and won't compromise, and instead of going to the ballet I would rather go and watch Terminator 9 ?* So if we find it so hard to relinquish power in our everyday lives (*I mean things like relationships and family are supposed to be loving and caring*) does it come as any surprise that a business or political leader will relinquish power in an environment which is accepted to be a pretty much "dog eat dog" "survival of the fittest" world !! So rather than be honest and admit they are all out to shaft each other, it does get my goat when leaders try to hide behind and even export the concept of democracy, as though it is something sacred and divine.

Interestingly enough in the worlds of politics and business, I do think the power lies behind the scenes, and that people are tricked into opposing a Bush or a Blair, or even a Microsoft or General Motors when they might be more effective in looking behind the veil to find where the real power lies. For instance get shut of Bush and what do you get ? another Bush, or different flavour of Bush. Get rid of Microsoft and what do you get ? Another version of Microsoft (Apple, IBM, HP) going to the top of today's business league - big change ??? Get rid of the CEO ... so what ? Does the power sit with the shareholders ? ... with the wealth probably concentrated in the hands of a very rich few rather than the daft concept of "shareholding/ property owning democracy bullshit" fed to us by hacks in the likes of the Daily Mail and the Daily Express. Swap Labour for the Liberals or the Tories and the machinery stays in place and politicians swap seats in the House of Commons - the views you read in the paper might change, and tax might get tinkered with, but everything trundles on pretty much the same - *and we are all surprised that it does* ! - now that surprises me !

Now onto machines, and why everything seems to become one. Par example things you stop doing for love you start doing for a living. So instead of releasing a record or book that you like, you do it rather for how much you can sell - now that sounds shit. Now I must admit that this type of "release for love or money conundrum" has never yet happened with my record label, but who knows one day it might. I like to think I would adopt the principled approach (a la Biafra on the Dockers Jeans issue) but until it happens you can never be sure. I guess it's probably true to say that I really don't enjoy the money aspects of things .... even putting on gigs and collecting ticket money, selling records (I much prefer trading), people get so self seeking and always looking for a better deal - amazing how you see families fall out over money, especially wills and legacies, and stuff.

Most jobs are machines, in that we robotically do what we are expected to do every day. What a life sentence. I write here as a victim. What is it all for ? So many people I know and work with, just want to get out .... But the only way they see for getting out is getting a lucky break, "a big win so I don't need to work again", wish I could win the lottery syndrome .... The downside here is that we are all caught up in lubricating the machine to get a piece of action so we can hop off and see it trundle off into the sunset while we twist by the pool. I don't have the answers, I could ramble on for days about our consciousness and things .... I am a firm believer that our DNA has been genetically interfered with, to keep the human clone a clone, and not a thinker. If knowledge is power ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE IS ABSOLUTE POWER. The meek shall inherit the earth, but not the fuckin mineral rights, and all that.

So with all the miasma in the air over "hooligans" travelling to Turkey for the England game I thought I should relate ideas to you. Hooligans like punk rockers all come under the media spotlight for one reason or another, from time to time. In the late 70's punks were a demonised, misunderstood, hard to pigeonhole grouping and vilified at the time because of it. It now appears however, probably partly for business and media reasons, that "punk rock" is enjoying a bit of a renaissance in the human mindset (well maybe the media's saleable version of *"the punk rock"*) Likewise the messages we are fed about "hooligans" changes with the weather. "Hooliganism is on the decline, under control". "Hooliganism has moved away from football stadiums and is now better organised". "Anyone who travels against the wishes of the F.A. and the U.K. government is committing an offence". "Football related arrests are now at an all low". What do you believe ...or is it all a hoax ? Back to punk rock, during the great blight of the 90's and the post late 70's media punk rock famine, very few would ever hammer their colours to the mast and proclaim "yes I am into punk, ... there might not be the mushroom of activity there was a number of years ago but there are loads of really great bands, still releasing loads of great records, if you would care to look further than what the bosses of NME and Sounds choose to print". In fact it was so funny that people used to say "*hey punk's dead, a flash in the pan, forgotten to the annals of history*" ... yeah right !! Now the bands in these magazines sound off saying things like "why I have always been into punk" and "why punk rock attitude is what we're all about - although we dress up like Oasis and sound like Who - and that's important to us and our fans" ? So, far from being despised we (*a term I use loosely as there are many strands and equally valid ideas about what this rich phenomenon called "punk" is all about*) are now not so bad, apparently an important thing both then and now - oh well.

So onto Hooligans (so named after the surname of an Irish crime family living in London once upon a time) and the press they get today. Like all groups, once the press gets a grip and allows it's football "correspondent" or music "correspondent" to start waxing lyrical about the phenomenon you just know you are in for a right load of printed drivel. "We don't want these hooligans marching around our town, spoiling it for all of us, attacking innocent women and children, disrupting law abiding citizens going about their daily business" seem better lines for "The League of Gentlemen" than media "insight" into people going to football matches.

For most people that I know, and I grew up with football is part of their DNA. Me and all my mates for instance would get to primary school an hour early and leave an hour late just to play football in the playground. Great stuff. Quality. Every Saturday since the year dot, we listen to, watch and talk about football - no harm done. Having a few pints, a weekend away, singing a song, even having a laugh is what football is all about. Having travelled to 70+ English grounds to support my hometown team, and having been to 3 world cups and a few Euro championships, when I see F.A. representatives telling us all what to do, how to behave, where to go, where not to go, I sigh heavily.

The irony of it all is that most football goers (rather like gig goers) are pretty much the same the world over. Enjoy the football, enjoy the music, irrespective of whatever the media or official commentators are saying. At the end of the day, whatever they are saying is rarely for your benefit, but for the machine which they represent. Below the manufactured "us versus them" rivalries of reds v blues, shirts v skins, punks v teds, we all pretty much get on ok together, and don't have the time to sit and listen to self appointed guardians of public enlightenment selling their newspapers to us and writing about things we already know and understand better than they do. The F.A. is an institution giving free trips for its representatives to travel all over the world watching the great game, and from time to time they take time to bore us to death whenever they get a slot on T.V.

So in conclusion... Power stays with those who have it, most will not relinquish it freely, if you have never had it you'll probably never get it. Most rivalries don't really exist on a day to day level (racial, political, football, music) until they are hyped up to the manic levels on match days and for whose benefit ? Not ours. Most machines exist for the sake of the well-being of the machine, and they trick us into supporting them !! Peel back the onion and ask who finances the FA ? Answer - *TV rights and the football teams* ... and who finances the football teams and the TV companies ? ... *oh that will be you and me .... So we all support the FA !* Remember you pay !!!!

ajh

Trust Me...
Steve Scanner

I have thus far abstained - both in the national and international media forums - from penning anything regarding the war in Iraq. If you pick up any daily paper you will see Iraq emblazoned across 50% of its pages; analyse any news footage and approximately the same percentage will be taken up on the subject. You get pro-war reasoning juxtaposed against anti-war diatribes; you get the asymmetrical polemics of reasoned debate and insane drivel; you get futuristic prophecies regaling a dark, ostracised future for Iraq had 'we' not gone to war, going head-to-head with promises of self-regulating liberation. In fact, you can get everything EXCEPT the much vaunted 'Weapons of Mass Destruction'.

I had no intentions of adding to this media overload. There is only a limited amount of reportage one can take before the senses become desensitised and almost immune to the catastrophic effects the war has had on every level. Yet, it is another form of immunity that has come to pass which requires me to add to the current onslaught of opinion and information. And in case you are wondering, no, I was/am not in support of Bush's illegal war waged in Iraq.

'Immunity from prosecution' - what comes to mind when you read that phrase? It may be naive of me to say it, but I think of your petty criminal being offered some form of reprieve from punishment for supplying information leading to the conviction of his 'mates' who had a car stereo smash-and-grab ring going. I don't think of American Generals offering amnesty to a person residing in the Top 30 list of 'America's Most Wanted'. Yet, in Mosul on 19 September 2003 this is just what happened.

Iraq's former Minister of Defence, General Sultan Hashim Ahmed, was granted 'effective' immunity from prosecution by the US Commander in northern Iraq, Major General David Petraeus. Added to this, US Officials promised the removal of his name from the list of 55 most wanted and the assurance that he, along with his family (consisting of six sons, three brothers and several tribal elders) would not be jailed indefinitely. To be granted this, all Gen Ahmed had to do was surrender to American troops and provide information on Saddam's weapons programmes. With it arrived assurances that Gen Ahmed was not the worst of Saddam's henchmen. Apparently, he wasn't even a third-rate barbarian - but consider the competition. This line-up of masochists also included Saddam's own, evil offspring - people shredder Qusay and his psychopathic, dangerously deranged brother, Uday. And then of course there was the infamous 'Chemical' Ali. Compared with those guys, I guess Gen Ahmed could be considered to possess a gratifyingly tame public demeanour.

To assume such a position of power within Saddam's armed forces however, we know a certain ruthlessness was required and matters affecting the personal conscience needed a large degree of ambivalence. So, how far did Gen Ahmed go in enforcing Saddam's will?

Can anyone hazard a guess at his exact role during the 1991 Kuwait invasion? Trust me.... I can't. In his former position he was Deputy Chief of Staff of an army which raped and slaughtered without penitence; without control; without fear of perdition. There are already 1,000 documented cases of rape placed upon troops who also had orders from above to use flame throwers, grenade launchers and machine guns on civilian demonstrators. This army also abducted 600 Kuwaitis and delivered them to the torture cells of Saddam. Where did they go? And let's not forget the environmental damage caused by the same retreating army when it blew up 723 oil wells. How much of that was conducted under his total jurisdiction?

We do know that when Gen Ahmed was Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iraqi army, he persuaded General Norman Schwarskopf to allow Iraqi forces to use their helicopters in the no-fly zone following the retreat from Kuwait. Give Gen Ahmed one more month and those same helicopters were being used to slaughter the Shia in the south and the Kurds in the north.

Coming up to date, British administrators are encountering a regular flow of people seeking compensation. These people are deserters of the army Gen Ahmed commanded. The punishment for their desertion was having their ears cut off. Sure, he wouldn't even get the bronze medal in the 'Sprint Of The Vile', but these issues alone represent more than just minor abasements.

I can clearly hear a faint voice whisper in my mind, *"Is it not unfair to lay all this blame at the feet of Mr Ahmed? I mean, what about innocent until proven guilty?"* Thanks to Major General David Petraeus we are *NEVER* going to know, one way or the other. To guarantee Gen Ahmed's surrender, as well as his immunity from prosecution, Gen Petraeus signed his name on what must stand as one of the most outrageous documents ever composed by a military man.

In this letter, Gen Petraeus offers Gen Ahmed, *"a simple, yet honourable alternative to a life on the run from coalition forces in order to avoid capture, imprisonment and the loss of honour and dignity befitting a general officer"*. I wonder what honour and dignity those fellas walking around Basra with one ear feel befits him. Another line states, *"As military men, we follow the orders of our superiors."* That justification would not go too far in a human rights court. There was yet another line stating the support of leaders in a *"common and just cause."* And what 'common and just cause' is our highly-paid General referring to? Is Gen Petraeus really condoning that it was 'just' to support Saddam on his systematic and continuous abuse of human rights? If so, how does this fit in with Baby Bush's proclamations about liberating the people of Iraq from gross human rights abuse? Our very own Foreign Secretary Jack Straw recently utilised the knavish benefits of hindsight to argue the case for war by saying it (the war) had brought this reign of terror to an end. Yet here we have Gen Petraeus seemingly endorsing the abuse of human rights by granting Gen Hamed impunity.

This not only represents a moral double-standard, but an intellectual one also. If you come from the side of the fence that states the human rights abuse in Iraq justified, or even partly justified going to war, then surely you would not settle for anything less than a full exposition of the truth? If the first part of rectifying the human rights disaster in Iraq was regime change - as stated by Bush - then the next logical step can only be trials and truth-telling. Yet, this truth has been censored; suppressed; sold - meanwhile Gen Petraeus posed for a photo with Gen Ahmed and his family before the former defence minister was lead away. One for the scrapbook Dave?

It is not clear why Gen Ahmed was afforded such special treatment. Others on America's most wanted list have been captured in large military raids while many of the Iraqi scientists and officials who surrendered to US forces have been held in detention for months without contact with their families, despite assurances they would be well treated if they cooperated. Saddam's two sons, Uday and Qusay, who were also hiding in Mosul, were killed in a fusillade of gunfire apparently without the chance for such a cordial surrender. The general appeared to command significant authority in Saddam's Iraq while his connections with the leadership were closer than most: his daughter was married to Saddam's younger son and expected successor, Qusay and he was by Saddam's side in one of his last public appearances before the end of the war.

You do not need to pass a degree in cynicism to suggest that the Bush administration - under mounting pressure to justify the war and the astounding lack of evidence pertaining to 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' - has been commissioning desperate measures in a bid to improve incentives for the former Saddam loyalists to provide that evidence. We've heard the pleas for more time to find this evidence from both Bush and Blair - yet they seem to forget that time is the very thing they denied Hans Blix in their rapacious impatience to get to the Iraqi oil....... um, I mean regime.

By casting this immunity, an American General has not only usurped the positions of judge and juror, but he has also robbed the Iraqi people of the information of exactly what part Gen Ahmed played in their oppression. Gen Ahmed was #27 on America's list of wanted regime criminals. That alone must insinuate an awareness of his crimes against humanity - yet, he is a suitable, noble and 'just' enough man with whom to strike up a deal.

But, I should not be surprised. 'The Bed-fellows of Bush' are an unsavoury bunch.... Think of one of the most memorable Bush speeches, which stated:- *"We cannot accept, and we will not accept, states that harbour, finance, train or equip the agents of terror. Those nations that violate this principle, will be regarded as hostile regimes."* The irony of Bush's oration is that he himself has violated his own principle! Last year Amnesty International confirmed that thousands of known terrorists reside in the USA, living beyond the law. The same report stated that many were trained in the dark acts of terror at 'The School Of Americas' in Georgia.

....Think of Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president - and West African warmonger. He was a man banned from travelling by the United Nations for war crimes against Sierra Leone. The UN Special Court accused him of having, *"the greatest responsibility for war crimes in the region."* And then along comes Bush and his mates to supervise a deal which allowed Taylor to retire in luxury to Nigeria.

There was a time when international justice seemed to be on the up. The investigations into genocide in Rwanda and the Balkans hinted at a new dawn - that things *were* actually evolving. Now, it appears to be in tatters. The aesthetic of these deals with the likes of Ahmed and Taylor suggests a prevention of further bloodshed. It does NOT question the cause of the bloodshed. With America entrenching itself within the culture of impunity, the victims of those tyrants are left with nothing but pain and distrust. And it is from this American-born pain and distrust that the dictators of tomorrow are raised.

On a lighter note, next time you are in New York City and you're tired of getting wasted on smack down The Bowery, pop along to CBGB's - the legendary home of NYC Punk. Here, you can now indulge in Punk Rock aerobics classes! Apparently you can work out there, using bricks instead of weights and doing ab-stretches to the sound of Johnny Thunders. Spit in your eye L.A.M.F. indeed.

Lastly, it's time to go public! My zine - Scanner - is on a long-term hold. Issue #13 (nearly sold out by the way) will be the last issue for what is probably going to be at least another year.

Those who know me will be aware of my love for New Zealand - I've been there three times and get morbidly depressed each time I return home. What only a few of you know is the fact that for the last three years or more, I have been attempting to move there long-term. I've had interviews, been offered jobs, even looked at a few expensive, dodgy (read:-illegal) deals. Yet New Zealand's Immigration Service always prove to be the final stumbling block.

So now, I consider it to be make-or-break time. I've found a way I can get there for a year. I'm gonna pack my bag and go, and hopefully I can find a way to stay legally beyond that year. I'll need a job of course and I'm willing to do pretty much anything. I adore the place, its people and the whole society there. I don't have the qualifications to gain automatic entry, nor do I have a suitable trade. And I sure as hell can't twist Mr Bush's arm to supply me with some form of amnesty!!

But...

I have since become involved with a Kiwi business which is sending people to teach in China!! That entails a listening / talking position more than the teaching of grammatically perfect theory. I've never taught before, and find the idea in principle a little daunting. But it's one hell of an opportunity (free executive accommodation, monthly wage, 15-hours per week, free Mandarin lessons and a travel allowance!), so, assuming it gets offered to me, I'll be off to Zibo City in the Shandong Province for a year!

Where that leaves Scanner is open to conjecture. I WILL do more issues, but whether they wing their way out of China, NZ, Ipswich or darkest Peru is another story. It could go on the web... although I really want to keep a printed issue going. Only time shall tell.

I'd just like to say thanks to all those who have supported Scanner thus far. My e-mail will remain the same, and you'll still see me appearing as a columnist / reviewer / interviewer in zines world over.

I hope to be a part of whatever Fracture mutates into also - and on that I want to wish both Dave and Russ the very best with their plans. And lastly guys, hats off to you for what you have done with Fracture - commendable indeed.

Later... Steve Scanner
Scanzine@aol.com

NIC JEVASS!
WHITE
OF
RANDOM NOTES

01 **Life**

On the whole, life sucks. For most of us it's a constant struggle to make ends meet, pay bills, pay off a mortgage, and work a shitty job to make a decent buck. Some of us are lucky enough to enjoy the job we work at, but still whine because it doesn't meet certain expectations we may have of it. That would be me.

Lately I have begun to question the validity and usefulness of what I do. Every morning I get up and drive an hour in shitty traffic to my work, where I spend the day designing websites and online media campaigns to make companies like Microsoft and HP more fucking money. I then leave work, drive an hour back home, and boot up the computer there to work on stuff that really interests me. The company I work for is mid-sized, growing rapidly, and the people I work with are great. I am compensated for tearing my hair out on a daily basis from having to deal with shithead clients very well - and it affords me a standard of living that I have become quite comfortable with and used to. But I feel like a sellout corporate whore - working for all the wrong reasons, but at least happy to have a job in a market where I could just as easily be doing bitty freelance work, or worse still, have no job at all like the hundreds of unemployed web designers out there in London at the moment.

And that is where my problem lies. I am torn between appreciating having a job where I'm not flipping burgers, and hating every minute of being there because the companies I do work for are so corporate and dull, and I am only allowed 23 days holiday a year

But the work I do for them pretty much pays my salary, and that means I can afford to live in a nice, safe, leafy area of North London, with my lovely wife and two cats, drive a decent car, and take numerous holidays abroad. I can also afford to buy cds, dvd's, new clothes and computer games. And I don't have to think too hard about it to realise that it's not really a bad trade-off. When I talk to people I know who are struggling to find work in my field, it makes me realise that I really should just shut the fuck up and swallow my pride. Because I have a job, and I have financial security, and I don't have to worry about where the money is gonna come from to pay the latest electricity or water bill. I have a lot to be grateful for and I think it's time to start acting that way, instead of thinking that life owes it all to me.

Life isn't meant to be an easy ride. But it is about making the right choices, knowing right from wrong, and being a decent human being. It's also about learning from mistakes you make and not making them again. If life knocks you down, get back up, dust yourself off, give it the finger, and get back on track. Enjoy the good times, and ride out the bad.

I don't have my dream job yet,

but I have a job that doesn't make me want to kill people, and I have a roof over my head with some material possessions that I quite like. I also have love. And that makes my life pretty damn awesome.

02 **Putting on shows**

Sunfactor, the band I play in, just got off tour. It was an amazing 12 days that sparked new friendships and cemented old ones. Every show we played we got to meet fantastic promoters, both old and new, who work their asses off, sometimes losing money in the process, to get people to shows at an affordable price, so that they can pay the touring or visiting bands a decent wage, and go home at the end of the evening content that the bands have had a good show and were treated well. Having helped in putting shows on in London with the Rude To Stare Collective, I have first hand knowledge of what a frustrating, costly, but ultimately rewarding experience it can be. It takes a lot of work, and a lot of organisation and preparation. If you want to start putting on shows just to meet cool bands, impress your friends, or make a lot of money just to line your own pockets, then please don't even bother, because you're not welcome in the scene. If, however, you're doing it or want to do it because of a genuine love for the music, the bands you want to put on, and the people in your 'scene' that want to see the bands, then keep on truckin'.

I've played enough badly organised and promoted shows to be able to talk about this with some degree of conviction, and would like to emphasise a few points.

Just bombing a few of your mates bands' message boards with word of the gig a few days before the show DOES NOT guarantee you a crowd. It does, however, guarantee that you are a lazy shithead who doesn't have the motivation or sense to put on shows. Give up now. By all means use this in conjunction with other promotion activities, but for the love of Christ don't let it be your only one, because NOBODY WILL SHOW UP.

Flyer, flyer, flyer. Make flyers for the show, several weeks in advance, and give them out at other shows, especially bigger shows that will have a lot of people there. Make sure you put the bands on there, what they sound like, the date, place, and what time the show starts. Don't forget the price either. Don't make them hard to read and don't do them in colour with a gold laminate - they're just flyers. Only flyer appropriate shows - the fuckwits at a Robbie Williams show aren't likely to gonna to want to see AnalAssFistFuckParade down your local pub in a few weeks time. Know your audience.

Use websites and word of mouth. Tell everybody and anybody who you think would be interested. Get the bands involved to do the same - it is after all in their interests to do so! Use communities like the Fracture Forum (if you can put up with the elitist scenester chest beating), kerrang, punktastic.com, punknews.org.uk, collective zine, and drowned in sound to announce your show. SO many people visit those places it's a really good place to get a show noticed. But like I said before, don't let this be your only form of promotion.

Harness the power of the Interweb. Make (or have a friend make you) a website with contact details and all the gig info on it. Have a newsletter and info section where people can sign up using their email address to receive info on upcoming gigs that you'll be putting on.

Be prepared to lose money! It's going to happen and the best thing to do when you have a really good show, instead of giving it **all** to the bands, is set aside a little bit for when you have a poor turnout. A lot of people think this is wrong, and that any money made after expenses (venue hire, food, soundman) should go to the bands. On the big and busy shows that RTS did, we always kept money back so that we could pay bands a decent whack on quiet shows and not always be out of pocket when doing so. Common sense prevails.

Strike up relationships. With venues, with the sound people, with the people coming to your shows, and most importantly with the bands you are putting on. If you get in good with the venue they are more likely to give you the dates you want, and sometimes even give you good deals. It's a symbiotic relationship - the more people you get in the more money they'll take at the bar, so you scratch their band and they'll scratch yours. Make sure to offer the sound guy food and drink - a happy soundman / woman means good sound! If the venue you use doesn't have a PA, hire a decent, but cheap, one. Don't ever put a show on with no PA.

Feed the bands! You have no idea how much they appreciate it! Make a big bowl of pasta, give some fruit and crisps, and water. Spend about £20-30 and if need be take it out of the money you make at the end of the night. The band's may make a tenner less or so, but they won't mind because they will have been fed! It makes a world of difference.

I'm sure I'm missing some things out - but this is a good place to start! It only remains for me to thank everyone who put us on the past couple of weeks - you were all amazing and it made the tour for us and Garrison, a truly fantastic experience!

03 **So long... And thanks for all the columns**

So I guess this is it! I remember picking up my first fracture at a Gameface show about 6 years ago. While other fanzines falled by the wayside, Fracture remained committed to the scene, and to the DIY ethos that prevails throughout it. Often working weeks of all-nighters, putting up with late payments, abuse from the very scene it had sought to inform and provide for, and slackjawed reviews and columnists (heh), Dave and Russell have done so much for the scene with Fracture, and we've all been lucky to have it. In this day and age, as the Internet kills off the want and will of young punks to put ink to paper, choosing instead to put a website up, I am glad that Fracture kept going for as long as it did. It's a UK pun krock institution my friends. The Maximum Rock n' Roll of these shores, attracting almost as much attention and drama, and with the same quality, passion, and professionalism.

Fracture, Dave and Russell, fellow columnists and reviewers, and all the friends I have made from reading this zine over the years - I salute you.

Reach me at **nic@jevad.com**.

Word.

MY TEN PENCE

Ben Smith

"Hung by the light of headlamps, just one of many workers fighting against unjust conditions who should not simply be forgotten. Remember." - **Pilger**

It's not the best thing to start a column with an apology, but sorry if this is a bit of a mish mash. I've recently moved house and in the turmoil, I've suddenly thought 'shit I haven't written a Fracture column' I seem to think about column topics / issues on a daily basis but short of some way of recording my brain I can never seem to get these things down onto paper. Oh well here goes...

No Sweat

No Sweat is something I've mentioned before in passing but I though it would be nice to write a little more about the organisation and how people can get involved. No Sweat is a national organisation that campaigns for fair wages and fair treatment for workers across the globe. This leads No Sweat to work with many different organisations and to have strong links with the trade union movement in many countries. Although No Sweat is a UK organistation it is part of a wider campaign against unfair labour practices across the globe, in the US anti-sweatshop groups are widespread on university campuses (although groups are not restricted to student members). Sweatshop labour and unfair labour practices are not exclusively found in the third world, workers in many 'developed' countries are often subject to unfair practices and are not paid a 'living wage'. Recently the GMB union and No Sweat uncovered factories in the East End of London where workers were not being paid the minimum wage for their labour (whether the minimum wage is a 'living wage' is another issue).

So how can we become involved in No Sweat and campaigning against unfair labour practices? No Sweat does not advocate a boycott of garments and products made in sweatshops, the reason for this is that this would impact upon the employment prospects of workers who make these products (there are also very few garments that are 'sweatshop' free, and monitoring companies to state whether they use sweatshops is outside the capability of the organisation). However it tries to improve the working conditions of people by putting pressure on companies to pay a 'living wage' through publicity campaigns and direct action as well as aiding workers directly in unionising and using a collective voice to improve conditions in the factories at which they work. There are many 'branches' of No Sweat across the UK who raise funds and campaign locally to highlight the issues of sweatshop labour, contact details for your local group are available on the No Sweat website. You can also join No Sweat which enables you to become more involved in organising the group nationally and gives you a vote at the annual conference.

No Sweat have a number of resources available for anti-sweatshop campaigning including 'Occupation: The Harvard Living Wage Sit In' video which documents a direct action organised by Harvard students in order to force Harvard University to pay a living wage to its staff. Although Harvard University is one of the largest corporations on the planet many workers were required to work two jobs or for long hours in order to afford to live. When workers initially confronted Harvard they offered to provide free education and schooling for workers rather than to increase wages to an acceptable level. The students decided that the only way to fight the issue was for them to stand up for the workers. The film documents how the students occupied the offices of the Harvard president in an 21 day long sit in. Eventually Harvard agreed to their demands and increased wages, provided health care and eliminated subcontracting for staff across the campus.

For more information about the campaign visit **www.nosweat.org.uk**.

1..2..3..4.... SouthCoast Hardcore!

Check www.southcoasthq.co.uk for gigs in Poole/Bournemouth, Southampton, Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight, Guildford, Basingstoke and even some Brighton ones (although there is a Brighton gigs site somewhere on the net), there's also a pretty good forum so that people can shit-talk to their hearts content. Yes this is blatant plugging, but the South coast 'scene' seems to be thriving (in July/August Bournemouth had about 10 gigs in about 3 weeks...as opposed to 1 every 2 weeks or so) there are some great bands down here who some don't get the respect/audience they deserve. There are 2 great DIY comps out, the 'Southern Comfort' comp put together by Matt from INTENT which is available free at gigs in the area (and Suspect Device www.sdhq.supanet.com usually have a few copies knocking around). Plus 'There Something in the Water' which is available on Red Crayon Records (www.redcrayonrecords.co.uk) based on the Isle of Wight for a measly £2 If that isn't enough then Milliepeed Records (www.millipeedrecords.co.uk) are soon to be releasing a South Coast hardcore video comp for you viewing pleasure!

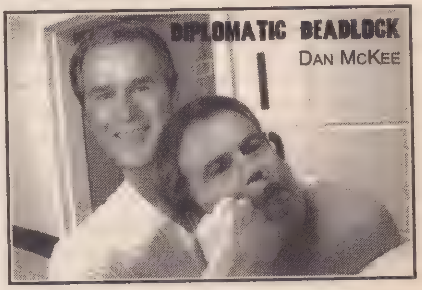
What do you do when the alternative becomes the mainstream?

Dammit I'm fed up with bloody 'fashion punks' and 'toni-and-guy core' fuckheads. Looks do not a punk rocker make, why do people seem to forget that there is more to this shit that just music! I don't give a flying fuck if your band plays emo, pop punk, ska-punk, grind, hardcore or fucking gospel for that matter. If you send me an email from your 'manager' or say that you are looking to 'get signed' I'm going to hit delete before you can say 'major label sucking wannabes! ...and then there's the fuckin' image! Punk is not about having a mohawk (or a toni and guy sculpted mullet-hawk) wearing your studded belt whilst you get pissed with your mates and make derogatory comments about the girl in the black and white lycra tights (that she bought in Topshop). There are no prescribed views to punk that's the whole point but there is a limit, racism and sexism have no place in our scene, it is about music not profit and most of all about honesty! Right rant over...on to the next one...

...and finally...

Just to say www.punkpages.org.uk is still going I haven't been paying much attention to the site as I've been enjoying the good weather and the Dorset countryside, but I will get back on it as the nights draw in. I have however had a few minutes to put together a website for those short fast loud, political punk Pilger which should be at www.pilgerpunk.co.uk by the time you read this. As usual any hate mail to benny_boy35@hotmail.com and if you want to check out www.lamanocornuda.co.uk .

"Have I found the right category, what would the people think? Do these shoes define me as a person and just where do I fit in? You say were different, I say were the same." - **No Substance**



So this is it? The last ever FRACTURE? Shit. That's really weird to me. You see, once upon a time, in the not-so distant past, I was a bright-eyed and bushy-tailed punk-rock kid (you know, before MTV2 and KERRANG made such things just a regular phase of the growing up process and it was actually a point of interest). I'd recently gotten into punk after a musical encounter with GREEN DAY led me down into the underground origins that spawned them and remember walking into TEMPEST RECORDS in Birmingham with Simon from my band ACADEMY MORTICIANS (this was back before punk rock was cool. In those days the "alternative" section was locked away downstairs in the darkest corner of the building unlike now it's situated on the first floor to use its popularity to entice customers inside) and finding the first issue of this great new fanzine

FRACTURE.

That day seems so long ago now. So much has happened since then, both in my life and in the world. I've recorded so much music, broken up bands, started new bands, made friends, lost friends, fallen in love, broken hearts, had my own heart broken a few times, travelled to so many places, moved away to Cardiff from the suburbs of the Midlands, had family members die, experienced so many things that I thought I never would, met people I never thought that I would, discovered who I am, what I like, what makes me happy and even what makes me suicidal.

There's been wars, assassinations, explosions, implosions, erosions, September eleventh, coups, the taliban, Monica Lewinsky, Osama Bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosovic, Clinton, Bush, Blair, Madeline Albright, Donald Rumsfeld, statistics, resignations, elections, deceptions, murders, cover-ups, regime changes, strikes, riots, protests, paradigm shifts, occupations, devastations, international relations, Maydays, train-smashes, market crashes, suicides, joy-rides, robberies, white-collar-crime, and a billion more injustices.

And in that time I've gone from being some faceless guy sending off his band's new demo to be reviewed from some anonymous post-box in Butt-fuck, West Midlands, to being a regular columnist for the 'zine. From reading interviews with bands and seeing their cool pictures on the cover, to conducting interviews, being interviewed myself for it and posing in silly nu-metal get-up somewhere in the hills of Wales for the mock-KERRANG edition, helping Monk Dave add the finishing touches to his fake-tattoo on Photoshop, and walking around every second hand store in the city looking for a shitty visor so that we could truly get that nu-metal look down.

Such a long time with FRACTURE being a part of my life, either as a spectator from the outside, or a participant on the inside, it'll be weird to see it go.

But at the same time, I think it'll be a good thing, because let's be honest, this mag was getting too revered for its own good. People seemed to forget a long time ago, that this was just another fanzine trying to do its thing. Instead of just some guys having fun and trying to write about what they love, it became a symbol, much like MAXIMUMROCKNROLL became in the States...if FRACTURE didn't like you then it wasn't just another opinion, it was *the* opinion. It instead seemed to mean to people that you really must suck, and so, if FRACTURE didn't like you, it was part of some grand conspiracy and you would actively campaign in the "fuck-fuckin'-FRACTURE-up-its-cockfucking-mother-sucking-tits" camp, instead of just accepting one person's point of view and moving on. For some reason, a bad review in, say, SUSPECT DEVICE, ARTCORE, or REAL OVERDOSE wouldn't cause any problems for anyone, but get a bad review in FRACTURE and it's war. Just as, if one smaller fanzine decided to dedicate itself to one specific sort of music (perhaps, let's say, the type that the editor *liked*), people would just understand that and either read it or not, but with FRACTURE, if they covered too much emo, people complained there was no hardcore, and if there was too much hardcore, people wanted more emo, etc.

It just became too big for its boots, and this isn't just with those who read it, as even writers started to feel compromised by what was *expected* of them, rather than just what they wanted to. I know I felt the weight of FRACTURE getting too big for its boots a few issues back, when I wrote a review of MUSTARD PLUG, a band I hate, and my unflattering, insulting, but honest review had to be pulled because of fear of upsetting their record label after taking advertising money from them!! An opinion censored because of advertisers? In a fucking punk rock fanzine?

Fuck that shit, and fuck FRACTURE being looked upon as a bible, it never was, it was just a fanzine made by two guys and a few contributors to talk about what they wanted to, listen to punk rock and have a laugh. Somewhere along the line, that got taken from them and instead it became adopted as a trend-setting, symbol of punk-rock nonsense. Hopefully the new 'zine will leave behind the bullshit so people can just enjoy a good fanzine again without all the petty-politics of people's hyped-up perceptions getting in the way?

OK, in terms of an actual column...I wrote a column for this issue many, many months ago, back when the original deadline was during the summer. Let's brush it down and dust it off and see if it's still good to go, it's about George Galloway if I remember correctly...

From 1956-1971 the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) ran infamous counter-intelligence programme, COINTELPRO. What made this different from the usual common or garden FBI technique of covert operations was that this programme was specifically targeted at radical political organizations. It's tactics were varied, but such various means all went to the same political end: to neutralise and discredit potential dissenters and activists campaigning against domestic injustice within the US by calling their motives and character into question through misinformation, deceit and the use of forged documents.

Although officially terminated in 1971, there have been many instances of similar tactics used since...the most talked about case usually being the bombing of Earth First! activists Judi Barry and Darryl Cherney in 1990...and many people concerned with human rights and civil liberties see the new USA Patriot Act, passed in the wake of September 11th, as being a twenty-first century beginning to a whole new wave of COINTELPRO. Although denied by those in power, the general consensus on the programme is, although officially it was disbanded in 1971, in reality COINTELPRO never left us.

Because I am aware of these covert tactics historically used to discredit leaders of radical movements (for example, a classic COINTELPRO campaign was used against Donald Freed, leader of the Friends of the Panthers, a white Black Panthers sympathizer group. Using forged leaflets and letters the FBI tried to paint him as an informant for the intelligence services to illicit distrust in his supporters and thus undermine his campaigns) it came as no surprise to me at all when, in the smoky remains of a ruined Iraqi ministry building, a reporter for the UK's *Daily Telegraph* "just happened" to find amongst piles of insignificant debris and rubble "secret documents" that accuse anti-war campaigner and head of the anti-sanctions Mariam Appeal, Labour MP George Galloway, of being on Saddam Hussein's payroll.

The accusations are varied as the story was picked up around the world. Some say Galloway was awarded oil to the tune of over six million pounds, whilst other papers gave much more conservative figures...but the general gist is that, in return for his support for the country, the MP for Glasgow Kelvin received a lot of Iraqi money from the Iraqi intelligence services.

Galloway has actively campaigned against the brutal UN sanctions that were killing Iraqis daily for over a decade before we started Gulf War II: The Final Frontier this March. Sanctions that caused more harm to the nation in that decade than Hussein's tyranny, and sanctions that it is widely believed were responsible for crippling the Iraqi people from themselves forming any kind of autonomous uprising against the former Iraqi dictator in the interim years between our two invasions of their country. Not only has he been campaigning against sanctions, but he was incredibly outspoken about the recent attack on Iraq by the UK and the USA, calling the war "illegal", asking troops to disobey "illegal orders" to fight such a war, speaking at marches and rallies, and famously calling George W Bush and Tony (C. L) Blair "wolves" regarding their stance on conflict.

It is very rare that a prominent politician would make such against-the-grain comments, usually they are found biting their tongues for fear of losing the chance for career promotion. Even Robin Cook, who admirably left the Cabinet in opposition to the war in Iraq didn't make such strong objections to the war...though that shouldn't really be unexpected from a man who sold hawk jets to Indonesia that were knowingly used to commit genocide in East Timor, and who presided over a bloody and hypocritical "ethical" foreign policy for years during New Labour's first term in office! The point is; Galloway was dangerous to those in power for whom war in Iraq was necessary and desirable. He was not some crazy person screaming on a soapbox in the streets, he wasn't some wacko writer publishing a vendetta-laced book, he wasn't some C-list celebrity trying to make a name for themselves by embracing the latest cause *de jour*, and he wasn't some crazy-assed anarchist writing a column for FRACTURE...he was one of *them*, a politician in the Labour party with access to all the same information the other MPs had access to and he hadn't bought it. Not only that, but his long term history of helping Iraq and fighting the cause of its people, unafraid to point the finger of blame at those who impose the harsh economic sanctions rather than just at the enemy of the moment Saddam Hussein, shows that this wasn't some flash in the pan tactic to cash in on growing public opposition to war an boost his own popularity, but a long term commitment to justice in the area from a man whose status as a member of parliament gives him an unparalleled air of legitimacy that the majority of anti-war campaigners lacked.

In other words, George Galloway was a very serious threat to those in power and a threat that had to be neutralised. The campaign began with a front-page attack from *The Sun*, who bore a picture of him with the word "TRAITOR" after his comments on the war and an editorial inside asked for him to be *hanged* for the alleged crime! The smear-campaign continued with a series of similar sounding pieces in the usual right-wing papers, but Galloway still proved to be a problem, answering his critics eloquently and intelligently, showing the factual inaccuracies in their reporting about him and clarifying his anti-war statements, thus giving them more exposure and gaining him more support.

As a man who single-handedly said what the majority of the population were thinking, including criticizing his own political party, it is no surprise at all that something would be planned to silence him, and what better way than to discredit his motives entirely? Who cares if a man calls a war illegal if he is on the enemy side? What matter is it for a traitor to call his county's leaders "wolves"?

And so the newspapers who oppose him mysteriously find documents linking him to Saddam by pure serendipity and now no one will listen to the disgraced Mr. Galloway, for even if he wins the libel action he has taken out on them, there will still be the seeds of doubt masterfully sewn in the public's collective unconsciousness by a newspaper that not only disagrees with his views on Iraq, but a newspaper who opposes his views on Palestine as well, something else the MP has campaigned about for many years, the Telegraph Group being controlled by Lord and Lady Black who support Ariel Sharon vociferously and on whose board of directors sit COINTELPRO-linked all round good guys Richard Perle and Henry Kissinger!

Obviously the only person who knows the truth of the situation is Galloway himself, but the Enlightenment philosopher David Hume once wisely said that if confronted with differing explanations for something, one should always believe the lesser miracle. In the case of George Galloway and his financial dealings with Saddam Hussein it to me follows a recognisable pattern of history consistent with the motives and power of those for whom the recent war in Iraq was useful that he would be framed in the same manner that others similar to him in other struggles over the years have been framed, rather than that a man had to be paid millions in oil that there seems to be no sight nor sound of, simply to state the opinions that are shared by a large percentage of the population anyway!

It is not like George Galloway was preaching the virtues of Saddam Hussein or asking for the slaughter of our soldiers over there in Iraq...he was simply stating, as did many other people including myself, that the war was illegal under international law, unjustified morally and that the biggest threat to the Iraqi people's health was the devastation caused by our sanctions more than anything Hussein had done. Far from not supporting "our" troops, he supported them much more than those who wanted to see them sent out to die for a causeless cause and suffer and fight for no reason at all, instead wanting them to come home and not lose their lives fighting a battle they had no reason to fight. As for his comments regarding the two hawkish world-leaders...as they passed up on every chance for peace and continually lied to their people until war was unavoidable, I can think of a lot worse names than "wolves" to call them and I don't think anyone would need a cheque from Saddam Hussein to say them!

I just think a simple use of rudimentary logic would tell us that what Galloway was saying seems more likely to be genuine statements of concern, as echoed by millions across the world, than something he would have to be paid to say, whereas, the use of discrediting misinformation to silence and call into question vocal political dissenters is a long-used technique. Hume's rule of believing the lesser miracle seems apt in telling us to dismiss the allegations as ludicrous when there is a shocking catalogue of evidence for similar set-ups and lies throughout recent history attempting to cut the credibility of those who try and oppose the ideological agenda of the powers that be.

I know, the accusations haven't really been mentioned much of late, but most importantly, neither have we heard much from Galloway, and thus he has been effectively silenced.

Then of course David Kelly wound up dead, silenced in the worst way, and his corpse has blocked the gravity of our government being exposed as misleading us all into this war, and lying to us about Iraq. Who's next?

Misinformation is everywhere, and the voices of dissent are slowly being choked out. Those of us who see it happening must stop it in its tracks and shout even louder. Just because the bombs have stopped over Baghdad, do not believe so too has the war. Right now the country is occupied by our troops, under a martial law with no justification. People are dying daily, even as our television cameras look the other way and no longer is Rageh Omar there to talk us through it. And again comes the question: who's next?

Who will Bush and Blair set their sights on next as the ridiculous war against terrorism heads into its second year? Iran? North Korea?

We must ensure that the lies that have been exposed over Iraq are not forgotten, and that the voices that expose them are not silenced. We must all speak as one, and all learn as one, and ensure that our troops get the fuck out of Iraq and don't stick their noses, or more importantly, their bombs, anywhere else!

OK, that's it...see you in the new fanzine, RIP FRACTURE, and RIP JOHNNY CASH.

DaN 26/09/03

whokilledculture@yahoo.co.uk
www.geocities.com/whokilledculture/
www.theatreanarchy.info
86 Kelsey Lane, Balsall Common,
Coventry, CV7 7GT, UK

Bullet of Diplomacy stuff :
We Are The Rascal Multitude CDEP £5
B.O.D: Shit In/Shit Out demo £1
(Cheques to: D. McKee)

TREV HAGL
GET SOME OI! IN YER LIFE!

So this is the end, eh? I never got to star in one of Vique's epics. I never got to meet anybody who admitted being into Emo. And I'll never again get into another top 10 of "worst things about Fracture". But at least I lived to see Cilla Black get burgled. Nothing, of course, to do with Fracture, but it's nice to see *some* justice prevailing.

I am not at all surprised this is the last issue. Musical differences aside, I know what it's like to sit for hours typing and feel like some cunt has poured acid in your eyes. I know what it's like dealing with shysters, knocking out a free publication then STILL having greedy cunts saying "can you send me the latest issue" without so much as a SAE. I know what it's like getting freebies galore and nearly all of them being mediocre or downright shite. And even worse, too much fanzine work keeps one away from one's natural habitat, the totty bar.

So what are you gonna do with your time now there's no Fracture? Here's a few suggestions...

JOIN A LIBRARY

Many Fracture readers will already be members - the Emo kids for their Mills & Boon, for example. But you'd be surprised what you can get. In our local there are about 30 geezer books, and even Stewart Home's "Cranked Up Really High" (one third informed comment, two thirds highbrow pretentious shit) and Penny Rimbaud's autobiography (good read but wanking his dying father off says all you need to know about the middle classes!). The books I would most recommend are anything by Dave Courtney, and "Machine" by his Sunderland counterpart Ian Freeman. John Lydon's book is a good read. But the best book I've ever read is "Them" by Jon Ronson, which tells you all you need to know about how the western world *really* works - you thought the Freemasons were sinister? Wait till you read this. Secret meetings in remote hotels, bizarre rituals in secluded woodland - no, not some religious sect - we are in fact talking about world leaders, newspaper proprietors and secret servicemen - all planning world events from behind closed doors.

There's also the Internet too - why sign up to a £15 a month package and turn yourself into a glazey eyed hermit when you can book an hour at the library free, and still have a life? (The obvious drawback here is they're not too keen on you accessing the old Frankie Vaughan though..)

FRANKIE VAUGHAN

All you Emo kids will probably already have an extensive library of porn, but look what trouble it got Gary Glitter in! Joking aside, New Labour - probably cos they're mates with people like top pornographer and right wing lunatic Richard Desmond who runs the Express - have, for once, done something sensible and relaxed the porn laws. So next time you're on a Car Boot Sale, keep an eye out for old videos (no, not Wizard of Oz). To get round strict restrictions on bootlegging, local DIY pornographers simply copy films onto old tapes, then if the Car Boot Sale proprietors start asking questions- "Just old tapes I got sick of mate"... The amusing irony is that if you bootleg Playstation games you risk getting hung by the bollocks, yet if it's German crack whores with every hole filled, they can't touch you (unless they search your holdall behind your stall and find 5 copies the same of each video).

Mags are pretty much a lost cause these days. Like all mags in newsagents they are padded out with adverts targeting thick people who'll pay £1.50 a minute to talk to a "fit blonde" (really a 60 year old fishwife) then find they spent that much they could've had the real thing. Apart from the old standards like Fiesta/Razzle/Escort Readers Wives, none of em are worth buying - just check your local 2nd hand book stores to see if they have a filth section. Some- like Book Corner at Consett - even do trade ins for your old mags (you can tell when an Emo kid has been there before you, all the Fiestas have the "one for the ladies" pages torn out).

The PC elite may not be too happy with your hobby and try to brand you a sad old man - the best answer to this is of course to report them to Chief Commissioner of the Right On Police (Andy Cactus) on grounds of ageism. And how's this for a moral in the story - in our local Charva pub the other week, I had the chance to dee a lass with the biggest norks I've ever seen. Only one problem, I had consumed such quantities of falling down liquid that collapse was imminent, so I threw the towel in and went home. I wanked furiously the next day - and later found out that she was riddled with every disease known to man! Wanking - you know it makes sense.

BECOME A RECORD COLLECTOR (aka DEALER)

Get to tour boot sales with one of those satchel bags, telling anyone who'll listen that "they're for my own personal use". While your mates are staring at tits in the pub, you can spend all night on e-bay then brag the next day about how you "won" something ("won" = offered more than all the other daft cunts). Though I do hear that there is a cheap CD / vinyl list available for SAE/IRC from Trev, Rosehill, 20 New Front St, Tanfield Lea, Stanley, Co.Durham, DH9 9LY. A huge selection with all types of punk covered from HC to Oi! to 77 to pop-punk.

SEE SOME BANDS... (BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE)

Newcastle, like many cities has been competing for "European City of Culture 2008". What this means is er... exactly the opposite. "The Centre For Life". "The Gate". A Casino. Posh Hotels. Huge new office blocks. A new bus station with a canopy from Star Wars (not exactly any use when sheltering from blizzards, but don't it look great!). But there's a problem. Slap bang in the middle of New Yuppie Central is a place where ORDINARY PEOPLE drink. THE DOG & PARROT to be precise. The ONLY venue in the city where bands who aren't in-with-the-in-crowd can book gigs. A place with ALTERNATIVE messages being put across. Better put a stop to this, and quick. And so, when I went to see BREZHNEV recently, the already badly air conditioned pub was even more like a vivisection laboratory than usual -

the windows were shut "due to complaints from residents about the noise". "They are trying to close us down" read another - more accurate - notice. Who are these residents? Do they exist? And if so, didn't they notice they were moving next to a pub with a live music licence? If I find a house next to a nuclear processing plant does that mean I can buy it for 10 grand, demand the council shut the plant down, then sell it for £50,000? Un-fucking-likely! Expect the same sinister manoeuvres in your town. Yuppiefication, combined with Tory Blair's new demands that anyone (pubs, youth clubs?) putting on any kind of entertainment will have to pay £1000 a year minimum for a licence, means war on real music. And a youth with no choice but major label wallpaper music is a youth that neither learns nothing nor questions nothing. Who needs Mandelson?

START YOUR OWN PUNK WAR

Remember the good old days - Steve DIY vs. Vanessa, Crass vs. Special Duties (& Exploited), Conflict vs. Oi Polloi and so many more. Now what have we got? Just Jello vs. Rest of DK, and Ex Cathedra vs. the ex singer. Unit vs. Headwound (& Fracture). Surely the punk scene can do better than that?

SUN READER BAITING

They say sarcasm is the lowest form of wit, but what could be better than taking the piss out of the lowest common denominator? Next time a Neanderthal gives you the benefit of his infinite wisdom, I have prepared a few lines...

SR - "WHY ARE YOU VEGETARIAN?"
A - "I just like being awkward" (or)
"I want to be like Adolf Hitler"
SR - "I'M NOT RACIST BUT..."
A - "Me neither, you can't even drag the cunts from your pick up truck these days, bloody politically correct.."
SR - "THEY WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM IDLE CUNTS ON THE DOLE"
A - "Fancy them drinking and watching porn all day when they could have the time of their lives working here!"
SR - "YOU'RE JUST ONE OF THEM DO-GOODERS"
A - "Aye, maybe, but I've got a few rapes and murders planned for tonight... is that Okay?"

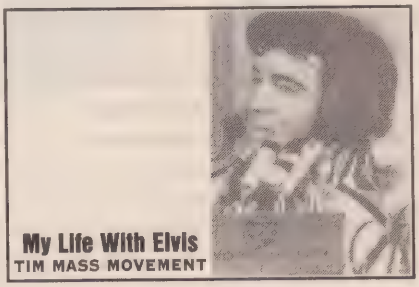
ARMCHAIR FOOTBALL

With real football now being a rich man's game, this is Britain's fastest growing sport. Simply watch Match of the Day or your local programme on a Sunday afternoon, then go into work and taunt anyone who supports the rival team. All the animosity/ thrills & spills of the real thing without a penny of your money going to spoilt racist gobshites who do 100MPH half pissed in a Porsche, abuse doormen of clubs and kick fuck out of women.

TOP YOURSELF

Let's face it, it hasn't been a good year if you're an Emo kid. Firstly, your girlfriend has left you (she didn't mind being taken up the arse, but asking her to wear a moustache and grunt like a taxi driver was perhaps a bit much) and now Fracture - the only magazine that caters for your particular brand of shit indie music - is no more. (Note that I cannot accept any responsibility for any middle class geeks found hanging from backpack straps with an orange in their mouths, I am not a Judas Priest record...)

So there we have it, and I will finish off in predictable style - by selling something. There are still a few copies left of HAGL 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE with the free MILK ME HONEY CD (25 tracks of melodic punk incl BOMBSHELL ROCKS, GENERATORS, VOICE OF A GENERATION etc). The zine features TV SMITH, INTENSIVE CARE and huge interviews with OI POLLOI and FRANKIE FLAME / SUPERYOB, plus loads and loads of abusive articles, reviews, cartoons etc. A fucking massive zine for £1 & 56p SAE from Trev, Rosehill, 20 New Front Street, Tanfield Lea, Stanley, Co.Durham, DH9 9LY, England. Or tight cunts can just send a SAE and get a free copy of SAVAGE AMUSEMENT.



"It's not a job,
It's an adventure,
Come smell the burning flesh,
Up on the hillside,
THIS IS THE END"

"This Is The End" - SNFU

This is it then. After this issue Fracture is over. Dead, finished, kaput, no more. Like all good things, the wagon is about to stop rolling and Fracture is about to be consigned to the great zine memorial in the sky, and like Flipside before it, will be fondly remembered, talked about, and something that the old punks tell the new kids about when they've had a beer or ten. After six , seven years - something like that anyway, Dave and Russell have shut up shop and decided that it's time to move on, ready to come back, bigger, better and stronger next year. So is it *really* the end? If they're doing something new, surely it's just going to be Fracture by another name? Maybe, and maybe not. Who knows? What is important, is the movement, stepping away from an established format. Change. I guess that's the word that I'm looking for, the inevitable change that comes with growth and age. It's a fact of life kids, stasis is a killer, and the only way to prevent yourself from becoming bored to death and being submerged by tedium is to accept it, embrace it and even encourage it. Change, that is.

Whether you want to admit it or not, it's something that everyone goes through. You'll start out with instant coffee, and before you know it, you've moved on to filter and the you end up grinding your own beans in some little wooden grinder, the bargain that would have been cheap at twice the price that you picked up on the last shopping jag. Grinding beans at 2 in the morning because instant coffee just doesn't cut it anymore, it isn't the same as the real deal because you've moved on. You've changed.

You can't be the person that you used to be. You can't sit around in Yosemite National Park, dressed in Native American outfits, smoking peyote, only to find yourself waking up naked apart from the feather headdress, two days later swearing blindly that you played pat-a-cake with Charlie Chaplin, discussed the origins of the universe and effects of time travel with Albert Einstein and read "War And Peace" aloud to The Go-Go's whilst sat in a tub of jelly. You can't cut it anymore. These days it's easier to smoke a pack of Camel Lights (Lights mind you, not the full strength lung busters, as being more health conscious, you don't want to do all that much damage - not that it makes a damn bit of difference anyway), sitting in your local having a couple of pints with your mates. Why? Because you've changed. Because you're not the person that you used to be.

It isn't fun anymore when you break into your old school and piss all over the teachers lounge, or shit in their desk drawers. It's harder to climb through the windows, and frankly it doesn't really mean as much as it did when you were a kid. It isn't as much fun to steal the local church bus and ride around in it shouting "All aboard for Satan", and "Tickets for the holy land, half price today only" at anyone who'll listen, because at the end of the day, some poor schmuck has to pay for your grand adventure. Although, it is still kind of fun. Just not as much as it used to be. It's no longer big and clever to moon passing motorists from the traffic island directly opposite the police station which is almost certain to guarantee you a night spent in the hotel run by the men in blue. It's not clever because they don't serve breakfast in the morning anymore, and take a dim view of the "youthful high jinx" excuse when you're over 30. Whether you like it or not, you've grown up and, yeah, you guessed it, in doing so, have changed.

You're no longer the kid who used to spend his days playing endless thrash metal records and trading tapes with people all over the world. For one thing, you discovered punk rock in '86, and haven't looked back since, and as for the other, well between paying bills and trying to make time for everything and everyone in your life, you just don't have the time to sit around dubbing tapes and writing letters all day. Shit like jobs just keeps getting in the damn way. You don't go to every show that rolls through town, because the bands just aren't as great as they used to be. You start wondering what happened to all the great bands that you saw "back in the day" like Negazione, The Bad Brains, Gang Green, Circle Jerks, SNFU, Youth Of Today (don't get me started on that reunion - "Youth" Of Today my hairy arse!), Flipper, Grotus, The Spermbirds and a whole host of others. You start wondering because none of the bands playing out today seem to have the power, passion or energy of any of the older bands. But it's okay this time, because it isn't you that's changed, it's the bands. The bloody kids don't have the balls to play it from the heart anymore, and so you go to the shows that you want to go to. See the bands you want to see (and believe me, they're out there, and just because they ain't signed to Vagrant or Drive-Thru or whatever the fuck they're called, it doesn't mean they're not pumping records out and paying their guts out. They are, you just got to look a little harder to find 'em). Sometimes, you stay the same while the world around you changes, and that's where the kicker comes in. That's when you've got to look to your own roots and embrace what you once were and want to be again. You want to be that snotty punk kid again, and boy, it can be a lot of fun when you hit your 30's. Trust me.

Okay, the point. It's this. While change for the most part sucks (believe me it ain't as much fun trying to dump and run from both the god bothering happy-clappers wagon *and the* coppers when get older, and it kind of ruins your day when you realize that you can't skate anywhere near as well as you used to when you hit 30 - but those of you who still do, hit www.middle-age-shred.com to find like minded four wheeled warriors), sometimes it really can be cool. Like with Fracture for instance. I've got a feeling that Dave and Russell have started looking back a little more, and are going to make whatever it is that they come out with next one hell of a punk rock ride. Because that's what it's going to be all about. Punk rock. Fracture may be dead, but it's just the end of one chapter, and the beginning of another. One filled with blood sweat, tears and a healthy middle finger raised high to all the bullshit that has infected the scene. Me? I can't wait to see what they do next - one thing is certain. It's going to be a hell of a lot of fun! See you around...

Mass Movement
Well, the new issue is out. #15 has arrived, and it's switched from A5 to A4. Ton of interviews - Dr.Know, Chris Hamrick, ISW, D.O.A, The Circle Jerks, The Stakeout, DRI, The Locust, Pistol Grip and a load more. Want one? Mail me - **massmovement@currantbun.com**

Vique Martin

So when Dave asked me to write a final column for fracture he said it should go out with a bang. I had plenty of notice... so I thought it would be best to be extremely naughty and then tell the story right here. One doesn't normally plan such events - but I had three months in which to create an exciting occasion that would befit the last erotic fiction I might ever write... Therefore I thought an exception to that rule would be appropriate. So I planned an event, followed it through, and now I sit back and tell the tale.

The location is a secret, as are the people involved. Let's just set the scene at a nameless conference and the participants be described as folks from a certain distribution company. The three chaps must be anonymous, as we wouldn't want to taint anyone's reputation. Or would that be improve? I guess that's a matter of perspective. It's hard to say. The fifth person is my beloved Swedish Sidekick. She's small, beautiful, and all the boys want to fuck her, as do some of the girls...

The drinks flow all night and the flirting increased amongst those gathered at the bar. I'm wearing an outrageously low cut shirt and there's many comments regarding my cleavage. I do have a rather large 36G chest - so I can't say that it's inappropriate. But I can say it was rather turning me on. There's been large amounts of flirting amongst this group before - but no-one ever followed-through. No-one ever said 'Okay then, let's go back to the hotel and...." Until tonight.

At around 2am one of the men said exactly this. They motioned towards me and my sweetie, and invited us back for more drinks. We knew that our company wasn't required to drink. That more than booze was on the menu. We looked at each other and smiled and agreed. We'd discussed exactly this event, this possibility, and how we felt about it only hours before. We hadn't really decided how far we wanted to take it - but we were certainly okay with exploring the options.

Piling into a cab, and falling out the other end, we head to their hotel. Their rooms are adjoining and there's two of them and they are big and nice, with mood lighting. The boys have plenty of drink to keep the party going. There's just the five of us now. She's on one of the beds with one of the guys and I'm on the other with two. I'm older, more experienced, and certainly quite capable of taking care of more than one man at a time.

But we're just talking, and one of the guys is staring down my top and making lewd remarks about what he'd like to do. As he does this he's gesturing with his hand, cupping the air a few inches from my breast. The other man starts doing the same, both of them joking but with an underlying air of seriousness. Slowly the joking lessens and the hands get closer and before I know it each of them is cupping a breast properly. Then they're discussing with each other how amazing my tits are. That they've wanted to do this for so long. That my tits feel as good as they look. It's turning me on incredibly to hear them talking in this way. And my nipples are hardening and the guys are noticing. I glance over I'm somewhat shocked to see the other two kissing on the bed. It's not surprising. He's the most forward one of the gang. The leader if you will. The boss. But it seems as though there's no turning back now.

She's drunk, but not too drunk to be sure that she wants to do this. She pulls away from him, comes to me, pulls my hand and leads me off into the other room - leaving the men all alone and stunned. We talk quickly and succinctly. We voice our reservations and decide that we don't want to do this. Then we do a complete turnaround and totally change our minds. How many times in one's life does one get a chance to be this outrageous? We make the decision to go back in the room. But the atmosphere has changed. The control is all ours.

The men are where we left them; two on one bed and one on the other. They're making small talk and drinking more. Our entrance causes silence. We face each other, ignoring the men, and begin to kiss. This is no show. This is me and her making-out and their presence is incidental. I can hear them talking and making lewd comments, but it's far away and irrelevant. I'm taller and bigger than she is. I'm leading the way in this encounter. We're kissing and touching and it's hot and passionate and tender.

My hands roam over her body, cupping her butt and pulling her even closer to me. Her hands slide under my skirt and are groping at the backs of my thighs, pulling me even closer to her. Our pelvis bones grind against each other and we're moaning as we kiss. We pull away from each other and begin to pull clothing off. I yank her t-shirt over her head. I undo her bra. She's pulling off my shirt, unzipping my skirt. We're partially clothed and caressing and kissing and it's getting hotter and hotter. Her perfect, perfect tits are mine to kiss and lick. Her pierced nipples are so damn sexy. Her smooth, pale, skin is so beautiful. It's simply heavenly.

My experience is abruptly interrupted by catcalls from the peanut gallery. I remember that there are men in the room with us and they are yelling obscene remarks. My horniness is simply amplified with the reminder of our audience. People watching you make out is incredibly hot. People who've got their cocks out and are stroking them as they do so; even hotter. This was our situation.

My girl and I turned around and looked at them. Three of them and two of us. Not even numbers. I led her by the hand to the bed with the two of them. The third grumbles and complains a little, but watches eagerly. He knows that he'll get his. He knows patience will have its reward.

Kneeling in front of the two of them, partially clothed, hot and heaving from making out, we take a cock each. She looks at me and follows my lead as I take his cock in my mouth and suck really, really hard. Big long strokes with my hand as my mouth takes in as much as I can. No time for teasing here. These men need blow-jobs and they need them now. My woman is a little more timid than I and her technique more subtle. I have no time for subtleties in this kind of situation. Making love is about being subtle. Drunken action in a hotel room - that is about being dirty. I pull back and swirl my tongue around the head of my guy's cock. Licking it from top to bottom in big, wet, fat, noisy licks; slurping always makes a blow-job better. Then I go back to sucking, sucking, sucking. The men are moaning and groaning and enjoying their experiences immensely. I only make it stop to switch places. A different cock to experience; different responses and preferences. The beauty of a good cock sucker isn't just technique; it's the ability to discern the way the man likes it and concentrate on giving him more of what he likes. And giving him things he didn't even know he liked. Didn't even know existed. I pull away from the cock and turn to her and kiss her. I can taste cock in her mouth. Pre-cum and the taste of cock are on her lips and tongue, as I'm sure they are on mine. We're both stroking the cocks and kissing each other. I lead the kisses down and the cocks closer together. Soon our mouths are swirling and sucking and kissing each other and the two cocks. I love cocks rubbing against each other. Love it. Especially when my mouth can lick and suck on both.

We go back to sucking our respective man's cocks and pretty soon there are words of impending orgasms. We carry on regardless and soon there's spewing cum arching over us both in a way that I've rarely seen unless on the small screen. Most of it landed on my friend and I turn and lick the stray amounts from her face whilst rubbing the abundance of men's cum into her tits. The two men lay back; speechless.

Our third man is far from quiet. In fact he's rather vocal right now. He's been patiently sitting on the other bed; wanking and watching. We both turn to him and then back to each other. I'll admit there was some whispering and giggling, but we decide not to prolong his agony any further. It was now his turn and it would not be something that he would forget in a hurry.

We stand and walk to his bed holding hands. I'm still wearing my bra and thong. She's still in her skirt. Not for long. Soon she's naked and then it's our turn to undress him. I stay in my underwear. I prefer it in situations like this. It's less intimate, seems ruder and, quite frankly, lingerie turns me on. Once he's naked we push him back on the bed and lay down either side of him. He turns from one of us to the other, kissing and sucking our mouths and breasts. Soon I head south and she soon follows. There's the two of us; kissing and kicking and sucking on his hard cock and balls. He's got his hands on our heads and giving us encouragement. We devour him in a way that makes him feel as though he's in heaven. But with enough time allowed I pull away. This one isn't going to come this way. I go get a condom and I put it on him. He's getting the full treatment.

Once he's safe I climb on top and ease myself onto his cock. He's really hard and I'm very wet from all the kissing with my girl. The combination is phenomenal. I start riding him and he thrusts up to meet me in perfect synchronicity. My girl moves herself to the other end of the bed, and sits herself down right on his face. He groans with pleasure and starts licking her pussy with all his might. She's facing me and we both lean forward to kiss and touch each others' tits. As soon as she kisses me and starts to stroke my breasts I come hard and long. Hells yeah.Pretty soon he's following suit. My spasms normally have that effect on a man. But my poor girl is far from satiated and we'll have to do something about that. Fortunately the two fellas from act one have already got brand new erections for us. We crawl over to the other bed. I pull out two more condoms and get their soldiers ready for action. Then I kneel down and motion for her to do the same. Pretty soon we're getting our pussies pounded from behind whilst we kiss each other warmly. Half-way through the sex man number one regains his erection. He comes in front of us and stands with his cock near our faces, wanking and telling us how horny this entire experience is. We can't allow these compliments to go unrewarded. And I'm never a woman to waste an erection. So he puts his cock first in my mouth and then in her's. As he alternates between fucking each of ours mouths his arousal increases. When he's fucking my mouth, holding my head, and my girl reaches over and sucks his balls, he's quickly pushed over the edge. As he spews his second load of the evening down my throat our gents behind us do the same in our pussies. Everyone is happy.

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end. My girl and I decide to take the party back to her hotel. Us ladies can go on for hours. Both of us still eager for more. Both of us never gone further than kissing with another lady. Both of us open to new experiences.

The men try to protest and argue that we should stay. But they are too drunk and too worn out to have any impact. There are promises of more erections and more fucking. But I'd rather climb into bed with my Swedish Sidekick and snuggle in the warm. And see if things heat up…

So this is it, my final column for Fracture Fucking Fanzine. Well it's not like I ever really wrote that much, always too busy editing 1,000 reviews into never enough pages or hassling Russell at 4am for that all important final layout I need before we can tie it all up and go to print. Always the monkey. The errand boy. The idiot, even. But enough about me, I want to talk about some shit. I probably want to cover more shit than is possible, but I keep thinking, *"damn, it's the last issue, make sure you don't miss anything out"*… so I will try not to.

My Year in Brief.

When it comes to punk rock, this year has been immense for me. After a brief, but heavily needed jaunt across the sea (well, 40 minutes in a plane from Cardiff Airport) to Amsterdam in January to hang out with friends and drink (we also saw RAMBO and THE GET UP KIDS on the same day… go figure!!!) the year moved along quickly with Jo and I going on a UK tour for a couple of weeks with NO CHOICE and AGAINST ME! in late winter / early spring. This was the first time AGAINST ME! Had been over to Europe, but most of their gigs were packed. Not only an amazing live band, but great people as well. From the amazing food that DS served up in London to the floor of The Hobgoblin almost going through in Brighton, this was a great start to the year. The gig in Cardiff was insane, the last "quote" as to how many people were turned away was something like 100. We had no fucking idea that many people would show up to the tiny Oz Bar, but come they did, and pack it out beyond capacity as well. It must have been the Fat Wreck Chords logo we added on to the poster at the 11th hour! A drunk Tom Fowler got ejected from the premises twice for being, well, an over-sided drunken anarchist oaf!!! And NO CHOICE were just the perfect support band, and are indeed being taken out for a full month tour of the US with AGAINST ME! In April of 2004.

In the spring, a guy called Alex from Gainesville, Florida came and visited Europe, including the UK, for a few weeks. He took some time out in Cardiff for three days or so, just to hang out, and experience living in Wales for a while! Alex, who also happened to be from one of my all-time favourite bands ever, PANTHRO UK UNITED 13, turned out to be a great friend in a very short space of time. He never stops talking (heh), but that doesn't matter because I got to hear loads of stuff about the punk rock fucking mecca of the Universe direct from the horses mouth, so to speak. Talking the shit on both old and new Gainesville bands while walking through country lanes up to Castel Coch… Brief moments in time, but important ones that will stay with me forever. In fact, I think the only downside to Alex's trip was when Gagz from NO CHOICE accidentally spilt a pint of beer over him in the local Mexican restaurant! Haha!

Later in the spring / early summer I went on a week or so tour of the UK with two bands from The Netherlands - NRA and OIL. Two very different bands, but on tour together because they're friends first. That's punk rock. I had a fucking blast on this trip, even though some of the turn-outs were not so good. There's only so much you can do to make the post-post-screamo generation listen to GOOD FUCKING PUNK ROCK before you just want to ram their Spock-haired heads down the fucking toilet, hahaha… But I got to see two great bands every night for a week and a half or so - what more could you want? NRA played a great cross-section of their tracks, always mixing it up (they have a LOT of songs!)… and as with AGAINST ME! previously, and later on in the year THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION and THE STAKEOUT, we got to put NRA and OIL on in Cardiff - a pretty small turn-out, but together with the mighty K-LINE supporting, it was still an unforgettable evening… later on in the tour we ended up in Dundee - "Shithole of The World" I think the sign said on the way in to town. The gig was good but I remember this night for all the wrong reasons, those reasons being a fucked up "punk" kid who took us to his flat for showers, etc. The walk to his place involved running over parked cars, spitting in people's faces and on their windows, trying to kick in those glowing parking bollards and just generally being a complete twat. After about 15 minutes of walking, I turn around to see half the party gone!!! Where? Back to the coach, so they didn't have to deal with this fucker. Once in his flat, one member of NRA was quickly shoved into a small bedroom with a young girl… *"he told me that I had to "entertain" the bands tonight"* she says to him… said member leaves the room quicker than you can say "smack head fucker pimping his underage girlfriend" and we get on with just trying to get done and get the fuck out of there. I shave in the kitchen sink, and as I am packing up, the kid spits in my face. That's fucking it, some of us leave, hoping that the others don't get into any trouble. I thank the people that put the gig on up there but - FUCK THAT GUY is all I can say. Sorry, this was supposed to be an "upbeat" column, right? Alright, so the tour came to a close down south, including a gig at The Ferry Boat in Norwich, which was probably the best gig of the whole tour, complete with an hilarious 45 minute OIL drum'n'bass set at the end, quite remarkable. Plus, we managed to shower without being abused by a Scottish mentalist (Mike in Norwich is alright, like!)… the day the tour ended, I went to London to hook up with Jo, who had just come back from New York, for a gig at The Underworld - TSOL and MDC were on the bill, as well as some ropey old BYO street punk bands. Russell, Adz, Steve Scanner, Pete Craven, Dave Stuart and more were there - it was like an old 'zine twats convention, but it was a fucking blast! The bands were great and the company even more-so. We stayed in London that night as the next day was the second Shoes All-Dayer, which we didn't want to miss. It was actually a pretty sombre affair, due to the not so great turn-out, but Dr Graham's DESCENDENTS covers band DESCENDAGE made my night. I think they made everyone's night, and really put the icing of the cake, so to speak, of an important day in the UK punk rock calendar - even though I was totally exhausted by then.

And then summer arrived. I can't even remember what the fuck I did all summer to be honest, except put out great CD's with Jo and start getting desperate about moving out of our unbearably hot, shitty attic flat… but come September and we were off again. This time to Los Angeles to stay with another person that we had been dealing with for almost a year, Rob Coe from the band THE ENABLERS. After a gruelling 12 hour flight, we arrived at LAX to the smiling friendly face of the man himself. We're soon in the car and heading up freeways and downtown streets for Silver Lake, the area that Rob lives in. This trip was a long one, a month in California in all, the majority of the time being spent in LA with our new friend, while also taking a trip up the coast to Santa Barbara and on to San Francisco for a few days. It would be impossible to do a full "diary" of the trip without filling up 50 pages, so I'll try and just tell you the interesting stuff! Firstly, there was the BLACK FLAG show at The Hollywood Palladium. This, my friend, was a fucking disgrace. Some old men went through the motions, pretty badly, in front of LOTS of pissed off people. "Hollywood in The Sun", haha. Luckily a lot of these people were under 21, so the bar was practically free the entire night. We drank a lot of Vodka's, or something. I can't remember what the fuck it was. Anyway, at one point there was an interval so that Dez Cadena could WALK HIS MOTHER TO HER CAR. No shit. We laughed and then talked about things like why I don't really skateboard anymore, but instead choose to sit in front of a computer 18 hours a day. As a night out, it was great - living it up in fantasy land, drinking, talking and watching punk rock make a mockery of itself... but one thing is for sure, I am never going back to the fucking Hollywood Palladium!

Later on we went to Sean Bonner's art studio in downtown LA for an exhibition of art based around the West Memphis Three. It was a very surreal affair for two lowly Welsh hicks, to be honest! The art was fantastic, and later in the evening Jello Biafra and Winona Ryder, together with a host of other people trying to help the WM3 get freed from prison / death row, did a sort of presentation / speech in the parking lot out the back. LAPD ghetto birds hovered overhead, the taped off VIP section was positively "brimming" with "big names" there just to be seen... and Jo, Rob and I stood in the audience on this sweltering summer night, drinking free ice coffee and just revelling in the entire "LA-ness" of it all! A good cause was only diminished in its validity by Jello Biafra seemingly taking over his opportunity to speak for his own means. He mentioned the WM3 briefly, but in a 40 or so minute speech he definitely didn't mention them enough. He even talked about the DEAD KENNEDYS suing him, and tried to make us believe that it was relevant to what the event was all about. He failed though, leaving us all feeling a little cheated as we walked back to the car.

Here's some other things we did while we were in California : Ate at the fantastic "Crest on Sunset" more times than is healthy. Go there if you're ever in town (Lucile and Sunset)... Saw CAUSTIC CHRIST at Gilman Street... Saw DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL at The Universal Amphitheatre (no shit!) with about 15,000 young (conservative?!) Californians, then ended up in the FREE BAR section of the VIP after show party (already totally fucked up on cocktails, beer, and vodka and Redbull's) with members of such hip up and coming acts as MxPx and BRAND NEW, and getting totally and utterly fucking plastered to the extent that the three people I was with (Jo, Rob and Rob's friend Shannon who drove us there) ended up hating my guts for at least 24 hours afterwards. I was a fucking dick, it has to be said... Rob said afterwards, "well Dave, I was warned"... Tried to drive to the Dr Strange Records store, and totally fucking it up - twice (we got their in the end!)... Did a UK bands slot on Maximum Rock'n'Roll radio that included FOUR LETTER WORD, BLOCKO, NO CHOICE and K-LINE... Took a sea plane around San Francisco bay (amazing)... Spent too much money in Amoeba Records, SF... Got to see my old friend Icki and Jacqueline for the first time in five years... Drove around Beverly Hills on a Sunday afternoon looking for The Osbournes family home, convinced they would "like us" if we rang the bell and said we were from the UK... Went to Venice Beach but couldn't see the sea because of the smog!... Went to this terrible fucking movie at the large multiplex on Sunset Blvd (next to Amoeba) where the director made a "surprise" appearance at the end of the film to discuss it with the audience. Unfortunately the audience consisted of just myself, Rob, Jo and one other couple, and we all got the fuck out of there as quickly as we could! If we were going to ask him anything at all, it would have been, *"how the fuck can you justify wasting an hour and a half of our lives like that?"*... I can't remember what the film was called now, but it was full of holes and SUCKED!... Spent an entire Saturday in "The Mad Dog In The Fog" pub on Lower Haight Street with a bunch of skinheads, watching the football and drinking bucket loads of Hoegaarden (when in Rome, uh...)!!! And just generally having a totally fucking awesome time every single day. We stayed the entire month basically for free (except when we hit up a hotel for a few nights in Santa Barbara) and we have Rob (and James) in LA, and Tim Brooks and his family in San Francisco to thank for that. We had a GREAT time.

So now we're here - the end of the year. We moved into a new house as soon as we got back from California, we had to, too many fucking CD's for a start! And as we race into December, and the end of the year, it's just awesome to look back on it through my eyes. The new friends I made, the old friends I saw on tour, and just all the rad fucking things I got to do...

So why did I tell you about all this stuff, why not just keep it in a diary or something? Well this year just gone, 2003, really summed up for myself on many, many levels exactly why I *am* still here, what I am doing so damn heavily involved in punk rock on a day to day basis. Underground punk rock - DIY punk rock. 18 hours a day for weeks at the computer followed by two weeks in a van... I would never in a million years have had the experiences I have had this year if it was not for the links Jo and myself have forged with many, many people all over the world, be it through the magazine, the label or the mailorder. I have got to hear a billion bands through what I do, and I have got spend time with some people who are sure to remain lifelong friends. This is ALL because of punk rock. Punk rock is why this year, in many ways, will be one of those years that I will never forget. All this stuff, it IS that important. If you don't understand what I mean, then I don't think you ever will.

End Notes.

*How great is this issue? Like, seriously. I think we've gone out on a high, and that was something that was really important to me. To wither away a pathetic shell of what once was is not something that appealed to me too much, so I just want to thank Dave Stuart, Steve Scanner, Andy Higgins and Tom Craven for their interview contributions - not only with great bands and people, but just excellent reads all round. I also think this issue is probably the best representation of UK punk in terms of circa *right fucking now* that you'll ever see. It's an incredible snap-shot of what is going on in this country as we speak - amazing bands doing what they do out of a love of punk rock - and doing it to the best of their abilities. No, not the "vegan-metal-straight-edge" scene, or the "post-indie-screamo-more-obscure-than-you" scene, or even the "we're-classed-as-emo-but-really-we're-corporate-rock-with-names-like-Thursday" scene... I am talking about the UK PUNK ROCK scene. It still exists, you know. And it's not half bad. So I thank these bands for the music they make, and the people they are. The records they make are what keeps me keeping on.

*If you're a "promoter" and you put a gig on for a touring band (say BREZHNEV for example), then you get two great local bands to support (say FOUR LETTER WORD and NO CHOICE for example) well, that's a great fucking night out, right? So at the end of the night, DO NOT hand over 10 quid to each of the support bands and say *"well it's punk rock, innit?"* - comprende? Not only is it a total fucking insult to the bands concerned - especially when together they probably spent over 50 quid getting there - but it also shows a complete lack of any kind of back-up or organisation on your part. DIY punk does not mean take the piss out of the bands you put on - local or not. DIY, yes - but do it fucking right, or don't do it at all. *Comprende?*

*Cardiff is going CRAZY!!! Well, not really, but shit *is* happening, people are communicating, bands are ruling... NO CHOICE, FOUR LETTER WORD, BEDFORD FALLS, THE TAKE... younger kids playing hardcore - SHAPED BY FATE, OF NOBLE BLOOD (almost Cardiff!)... some great gigs have been going down (RED ANIMAL WAR with BEDFORD FALLS in THE TAKE's practice room recently was DIY punk rock excellence)... The benefit gig set up by Tom Fowler and The Cardiff Anarchist Network with NO CHOICE, IN THE SHIT and more... people are getting on (almost!) and for once in quite a while I personally feel like there is an "atmosphere" here. Local hardcore label Staunch is finally up and running and people like Tom BEDFORD FALLS are trying their best to keep things alive by acting like everyone's dad. The good times are here kids, don't ignore them.

**What The Fuck? Dept...* Okay, so we all know that CONSUMED, HOT WATER MUSIC, and others have now appeared on the Tony Hawk's skateboard video games, but the latest one (Tony Hawk's Underground) also includes STRIKE ANYWHERE - AND is sponsored by McDonalds!! You only know this because out of all the buildings on the streets, like in the New York level, the only properly visible shop you can see is a fucking McDonalds restaurant... I have to ask, did STRIKE ANYWHERE actually know in advance that they would be on a game sponsored by, of all fucking corporations, McDonalds? Does Jade Tree even give a fuck? Or is it all about the money? PAINT IT BLACK are also on this game. Is this the end of all punk as we know it - collaborations between political punk bands and multinational corporations like Sony (Playstation) and McDonalds? Did the New World Order already start, and I was just too busy talking shit on the internet or playing with our new kitten Arnold to notice? Are we all "friends" now? I think STRIKE ANYWHERE are a great band, but sometimes I have to wonder who actually makes the decisions for certain bands when they're at the level that STRIKE are at right now... *Dear AGAINST ME!, please do not appear on a corporate computer game. Yours sincerely, Monk Dave.*

*And finally, here's some other "Character References" I just remembered that didn't fit on the introduction page... **(1)** The time I told HUNDRED REASONS they were "fucking sell out cunts" to their faces because I didn't realise it was those fucking sell out cunts I was actually talking to in a Cardiff pub at the time, haha... **(2)** The time that rubbish band with those special needs people in it from London wrote not one, but two songs about how Fracture is racist and homophobic because they got a bad review. Everyone knew they were just being temper tantrum four year olds though, so it was like water off a ducks back to us. Last thing I heard was that we were all *"thucking cunths"*... **(3)** The time I got cornered in the TJ's venue, Newport by an angry band who were not happy about the review David Stuart gave them. I kept saying, *"but I didn't write the review"* over and over until I was blue in the face and went off to the bar. They took it all so seriously, and definitely ended up with "egg" on their faces... **(4)** The time SERVO named their 7" "Now We Are Six" because I had said in a previous review of their CD that the singer sounded like a six year old girl. That's called taking it on the chin and having a sense of humour. Some bands could learn from that... **(5)** The time Russell got collared by a girl he knew up in Hull because she was unhappy that a certain Monk had reviewed THE DONNAS, stating "why do the four Donna's all look like they've been attacked by a psychopathic plastic surgeon?" I think Russell said something like *"but I didn't write the review"*. We were all so good at passing the buck... **(6)** The time a very, very angry ex-Maximum Rock'n'Roll coordinator went totally ballistic on me because of the interview we ran with the then current coordinators that said some things about the ex-coordinator that she did not like - one damn bit. Man, that chick was pissed. She took her revenge on said (then) current coordinator in an issue of LA's "now defunct "Angry Thoreauan" magazine. We laminated the letter she sent us and framed it in the bathroom. That lady, a real Angel she was... **(7)** And finally, there was the time that terrible and silly band (SPUNGE) phoned me up to complain that ONE CAR PILE-UP had been talking shit about them in their interview... hello? The 'zine was already out, what did you want us to do, "recall" all 5,000 copies because your pathetic "ska-punk" ego's got bruised? Haha... punk rock, don't you just love it? I do!

So that's me done then, my final ever column for Fracture fanzine is in the bag. I'll just end by saying a big thanks to everyone that ever helped out, placed adverts, contributed interviews, called me a twat, etc, etc, etc.

This issue, as always, is for Jas Toomer and Jon "Shoes" Kay.

RUSSELL
REMAINS
SOUTH
666
TRUST NOTHING

I'm jinxed. Icy tendrils are stroking the tense muscles in my shoulders again, and by now I don't even bother shivering; I know the touch of fate all too well these days and I also know not to even bother deflecting his dark-eyed gaze. Take it from me, until you've been bent double and fucked into next week by Fate then don't even bother trying to outmanoeuvre it with some fancy footwork. Just accept it and embrace it. Carry it with you like a bag of fool's gold.

So what taints my mind and tongue with this grim austerity? I'll tell you. I'm sat on another plane on another runway and we're not fucking moving. When I'm on an aeroplane we never move when we should. If you want a couple of unplanned extra days at the end of your holiday, just invite me along for the ride. Months prior to this I was sat on a runway in Havana, sipping patiently on my usual complimentary order of a Bloody Mary and an ice cold beer. I say patiently because I was waiting for the inevitable, and sure enough we're sooninformed that the plane is delayed. Of course the pessimist in me knows that 'delayed' means 'cancelled', so I breathe a snarl and resign myself to it. And strike me one on the chalkboard for hours later I'm back in a hotel on the Havana seafront, killing two days in a Communist Country with the most minimal grasp of Spanish and a maximum intake of Mojitos. Man cannot, after all, survive on the prettiest girls you've ever seen and never touched, and the golden rays of a Caribbean sunset - at least not this man.

So skip that digression and fast

forward a few months; I'm stretched out on a plane at midnight with a full aisle to myself, the engines quietly humming as it sits on the smooth tarmac of Bangkok International Airport (the only one, incidentally, that I have ever witnessed to have a full golf course sitting in the cosy median between two of it's major runways). I'm already on my second vodka, lime & soda and Singha beer and I'm getting to the point where I'm checking out if there's any possible chance of joining the Mile High Club on this flight or just resigning myself to the fact that I'll be an honorary member of the Solo Mile High Club until my dying days. Four fucking hours later and I'm still here. I've exhausted the southern rock CDs in my bag and I'm getting that warm, fuzzy, wrap-your-arms-around-me feeling that comes with drinking on your own and listening to suicidally good lyrics. As the tannoy announces the cancellation of the flight KL878, the rest of the plane grumbles like cattle in the feeding pens of an abbatoir, I merely smile wryly... these idiots didn't know they were on a flight with me... how could they know it would be cancelled? So we load off the flight and back into the stifling tropical midnight air and onto a fleet of buses. I sit down and wait for a pretty girl to sit next to me. (In my half-drunk mind's eye I'm thinking of the girl sat opposite me in the waiting lounge, a girl that I was transfixed by. She was perfect, she was beautiful. I can't explain it. Her mannerisms, dress, hair, skin, smiles, frowns, eyes, everything - it was just perfect. I could only blame my hormones for this bewitchment, which would also explain why the night previous I was sprawled on a bed in a suite of the Marriott shedding a tear at some lame excuse for a movie with Kevin Spacey and the little shit out of "Sixth Sense" and thinking "I'm falling apart... I'm being emotionally affected by the slushiest movie of all time..."). So anyway, this guy sat next to me. Thanks fate, I owe you one.

Back at the hotel I survey my territory - it's a plush room with crisp sheets and a TV showing soft-porn mounted above the multi-jet shower. I sit on the bed and consider my options. In light of the fact that hotel rooms without company are the world's loneliest places, I jam a dead credit card into the keycard slot to keep the aircon blowing and head downstairs to the lobby. By now it's 3am and the vast majority of passengers are in their rooms, probably making the most romantic and passionate love possible so I push that dispiriting thought to the back of my mind, slide onto one of the barstools and order a rum and coke. I'm in a small line of other fellow drifting souls, travelling alone, and in search of a friend in alcohol. The endless rounds of Singha and rum soon loosen our tongues and here lies the beauty of such scenarios; where else would I get to talk to a flirty Dutch businesswoman with sculpted silk-clad legs and a bitter outlook; an old English gent in a brown nylon Louis Vuitton shirt that he must had since the 1970s and a slurred voice that he's had all his life; and a Canadian in exile and on his way to start a shift on an oil rig in Kazakhstan. One bar and all human life. An hour later the four of us step out of a cab in the city and are ankle deep in a flood on one of Sukhumvit's major intersections. A thunder storm is crashing overhead like an apocalypse, the power across half of Bangkok has been knocked out and the streets are like rivers. We're headed to a bar that serves 24/7 and I'm thinking this is how life should be... a foreign city, a tropical thunderstorm, streets shimmering under neon billboards and beyond drunk in the company of three of the unlikeliest new-found friends you could wish for. The spontaneity of life is sometimes, infrequently, beautiful. Live a little, breathe deeply.

It's been my second trip to Thailand in six months, the first time as an enslaved man watching his previous life slip through his fingers like the sand of Ko Samui, and the second time as a man gulping down everything he's missed for a few years. This time around I'm on a company trip; I hesitate to call it a business trip although it's all expenses paid, because the bare facts are that no business is done, it's just an excuse for ten guys who all work for the same company to get together for a week of the high-life. We gather from England, America, Norway, Thailand, Brazil and Ireland for a week of beer, tequila, cigars and cholesterol. We do it every year, and we live as high as life can get.

I'm one of those guys and we all work in the field of pornography.

So there it is then; my rent, my food, my clothes, my car, my books, my alcohol, my guitar, my computer and hell, even the money that I put into Fracture... it's all paid for with my earnings from pornography. I manage customer accounts, design websites, maintain servers and generally do a bunch of other stuff to keep a group of 'adult websites' online and keep the customers happy, and of course content. And that is my full-time occupation. And well hey, fuck me (or just watch if you want to be the voyeur) if there isn't a certain irony in it all, considering that when I produced my fanzine prior to Fracture that I garnered a certain reputation for writing about sex and pornography more than most punk rock fanzines were in the early 1990s. I was training to be an architect at the time; how was I to know how things would pan out ten years later?

And now I had better disassemble a few myths... I am not a porn star nor have I ever appeared in any pornography. Yes, I do know and I have hung out with porn stars, they just happen to be people who are employed in the same industry as me. No, I do not produce or distribute pornography, I am a backroom cog in the machine, no different to a layout designer or accountant for Fiesta or Razzle. No I do not make a lot of money from it, I make just enough to live on and it affords me the benefits that come with being self-employed and working from home. Yes, you may ask how you get a job opening in the porn industry and I will tell you that you won't; you fall into it, almost all of us have. Life takes turns, you follow them and occasionally a trapdoor opens and you choose to either drop down or skip over it. I work for my brother, he owns the company, he fell into it too. He makes a whole lot more money than I do, but you don't need to know how much. Enough to live in Hawaii. Why Hawaii? Because he makes enough money to live in Hawaii; it's a lifestyle choice. And yes, our parents do know what their sons do for a living - it's possibly not the field they saw their two degree-educated sons going into but they don't mind - we make enough money to live on, and it's a whole lot better than the scurrilous things they used to think we did to earn money - prostition and drug-running for starters. Seriously. But hey, we're such a legit company we have our own offices, our own accountant and we even make a sizeable donation to Amnesty International every Christmas if our members send us postcards from their hometowns. And that's more legit than fucking Enron ever was. I don't have a 'problem' with porn but I don't mind if you do, just don't bother arguing the point with me because I couldn't care less. I know a lot of models and they made a choice to pose naked, they make good money from it and I'm not going to be the guy to tell them to quit and go get a factory job. And herein lies a beautiful hypocrisy that I have witnessed more times than I'd care to mention over the years; consider a conversation I had with a female friend of mine when I told her what I did for a living:

Her: "Oh my god, that's so bad. I can't believe you exploit women like that!"

Me: "I don't"

Her: "Of course you do, you present

them to a lowbrow male audience as nothing more than sexual toys!"
Me: "No, I don't."
Her: "...and then these men believe that all women are there for their sexual titillation and will drop their clothes and spread their legs on any given day!"
Me: "Um, you're in the wrong ballpark. I don't exploit women."
Her: "You're kidding me? It's gay sites, with men? Ha, I guess that's okay then!"
Me: "Well thank you for possibly the most hypocritical turnaround in an anti-porn argument I've ever heard. Okay to exploit men but not women right...?"
Her: "Well, they're doing it because they want to... not because they're desperate for the money!"
Me: "Nice blind assumption! Anyway, you're still wrong... I don't exploit men either..."

So, this where I pull back the magician's curtain with a hearty cry of Shazam and a mere utterance of "really, who gives a fuck anyway?"; for in truth we operate the largest group of (predominantly) transgender websites on the internet. Aye carumba, what perversion is this that Remains hath revealed to my hitherto puritan mind? What sort of twisted logic is this charlatan flinging at me like a filthy jezebel? Well let's just say that I'd hesitate to even call it a niche range of websites these days, being that it's one of the largest interest porn markets behind straight porn these days - I see the turnover of customers that are into this stuff, I know the stats. Now understand that I'm not talking about transgenderism in the same way that you are probably thinking about it: fat men in party frocks right? In which case you have your 'trans' mixed up; that's a transvestite. Bejesus, this is like Sex Ed 101.

Transgenderism (TG) is a life-change, not just a quick clothing change. It's hormone treatment, it's a born-male living 24/7 as a woman and to all intents and purposes being a woman. Now I'm not going to go into this too deeply because if you're really that interested you can go read up about it yourself, but mark my words, you've probably walked past a TG before and never even realized. Now I've hung out with plenty of TG's before, it comes with the territory and it's just like hanging out with women... the whimsical side of which is guys in bars like to stand alongside you in the urinal and say things like "got yourself a right couple of little stunners there mate!". I reply, "aye, stunners... you better believe it." Oh, and just to shatter another myth, no, you'd never take one home without knowing about it... believe me the last thing a TG wants is to hoodwink some poor sex-starved sap like you.

Now at this point I should probably point out that I've never had sex or even been 'intimate' with a TG, it's just not my thing. And no, I don't crossdress myself, I have a beard, a shaven-head and a hairy stomach, I would possibly make the shittiest broomstick of a woman you'd ever be likely to see. My role as an Ugly Sister in my junior school panto proved that much. I'm attracted to women and (attempt to) have sex with women. So who is attracted to TG's, who's spending these $$$'s at our websites? Everyone. Straight guys, gay guys, bi girls and a sizeable proportion of straight women too. They pay their money, we give them the goods (and plenty of it) and the models get paid their fees. It's just a typical marketplace with workers, producers and consumers. Like I keep saying to people, my job is just a job. We're all working, producing and consuming - the end product of all your chosen path is your prerogative. Sure, there's flesh on the skeleton I've pulled out of the closet that I've not mentioned - I've seen sights and been to places I never expected for a simple geordie kid, but you need to hear about that stuff like I need to hear about how you ended up in the stationary cupboard with the receptionist at your office Christmas party, right? And no, before you ask, you cannot have a free membership to any of our sites. Pay my fucking wages, sex crawler.

So there's my blueprints all laid out, I'm just your basic devo in an employment role that will see me burning like a unrepentant sinner in the molten furnaces of hell come Judgement Day.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

I was going to write a little more on why me and Dave decided to put a few drops of arsenic in Fracture's pint and drag it to a shallow grave but I can't be fucked now. We just decided Fracture has ran its course and we've done everything we wanted to with it. Sometimes we just want to watch a movie, play some Counterstrike, smooch with lovers or mix up new cocktails. And Fracture kills this. It's possibly already robbed me of a career and a relationship (at least I blame Fracture because that's easier than blaming myself) but I hold nothing against it; we're killing you out of love baby, just you remember that.

The show is over, the limelight has faded, the curtains have closed for the final time so I'll leave you with the end credits: **(1)** In 25 issues of Fracture I have only been physically threatened with 'a good kicking' three times. And I'm meant to be the nice guy at Fracture. In the same 25 issues I didn't make any physical threats. That's the sharp end of critical journalism right there ladies and gentlemen. **(2)** I conducted a sizeable proportion of my review writing when drunk, hence the public perception that I can be a little scathing when in reality I was probably only bitter because some girl had spurned my advances. That was unfair on quite a few bands who caught the hot, wet end of my forked tongue. In fairness though all of those bands were shit, so I retract my previous apology. **(3)** Me and Dave once took some money from the Fracture bank for a Christmas bonus and we never paid it back. This means we have stolen from the public funds of the punk rock scene. When it all comes down around us it'll be those few extra Christmas pints that caused it. **(4)** I once wrote an hour's worth of reviews by playing the records just a little bit louder than Iron Maiden's "Live After Death" double album that I was actually listening to in the background. In fairness to the bands they probably got a better review than they deserved because in all honesty I was listening to Steve Harris and not their shitty music. **(5)** I once delayed all the subscribers mail by two days because I took all the bundles of Fracture and constructed a sort of igloo out of them. When I climbed inside this papery womb, I was so impressed and comfortable that I left it there for two days and occasionally had a cup of tea whilst sitting in it. I eventually conceded to myself that I would have to demolish it and send out the subscriptions. **(6)** The Sun were once a few hours from printing a story in which they named me and listed my occupation as a policeman (this is genuinely true). I did not bring this about at all and it was totally beyond my control. However, if the story had of been printed I was ready to dupe a lot of people, including Fracture readers, that I genuinely was an undercover copper. The Sun however decided to drop the story at the last minute because of a lack of corroborative evidence. Again, I must stress I was somewhat of an innocent bystander in that whole story.

Bury my heart and dig up our bones - we'll be back. I'm resting here.
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THE TAKE

THE TAKE are a band from Cardiff, capital city of Wales, UK. They play great music that hints at "post hardcore", sounding like a cross between JAWBOX, BIG BLACK, JAWBREAKER and FUGAZI. Not only that, but they play it better than most and are also incredibly nice people. It makes me happy that they live in the same city as me.

Interview by Monk Dave.

Fracture - *Okay, TAKE, give us a rundown of your history if you may. Include all that stuff about being young kids and obviously regretting initially calling the band FISHTAKE! What releases do you have out to date? How did you end up with an album on Household Name Records? I remember they had to "vet" you as a live band first, and put you on with DILLINGER 4 in London - was it really like that? If you had been really crap that night, and they told they weren't interested after all, would you have smashed some windows on the way home?*

Jim - Well, Dave, we started banging about in like, '96 or something, just me, our first guitarist Paul Copner and our first bass player Richey. At the time it was just about having something to do on a Sunday afternoon – we'd go down to Barry Island, set up in a warehouse we had access to and bang out some covers, which were mainly NIRVANA songs. I was playing drums to start out with which was cool because I really wanted to learn how to play them half decently. We started writing one or two silly tunes and then someone offered us a gig. Charlie took over on bass after that, which was cool because he and I had been writing and recording some tunes together for a while, so it kind of tied together nicely. Oh yeah, and we changed our name from FISHTAKE because we never even expected to play any gigs in the first place, but the name stuck as soon as we did start playing. After a while it became really annoying having people ask - *"Fishtake? What the hell is THAT about?!"*, so we dropped the Fish. Our friends in Cardiff always referred to us as THE 'TAKE anyway.

Charlie - Jim and I had been looking for a drummer for a few years to work on ideas of his and we were lucky enough to persuade Will Rees, who had just left FOUR LETTER WORD, to jam with us. We got on really well and as Jim was now free to play guitar and sing this meant we could write some more interesting tunes. We wrote and recorded an EP called "Private Foul and Surface Water" which we released on our own label - 23:59. We booked a tour with our friends DOUGLAS for spring 2001 (largely through contacts from the first Fracture DIY promoter's guide!) and hit the road! Paul couldn't get enough time off work for the whole tour so we asked Pete, who was rocking with the Brecon NO COMPLY at the time, to do the last week. Just after we had recorded our next bunch of songs Paul began finding it hard to make time for practice and playing shows and he decided to bow out. We were on the phone to Pete quite rapidly and to our delight he was up for joining the band.

Pete - Well I had kind of been kicking around Cardiff with nothing but a four track for a couple of months after NO COMPLY subsided, when to my delight one cold winter night I received a call from Charles asking if I would join their band. Having always been a fan - I was pretty stoked and jumped at it. Then shortly after the album was finished and we set about playing some shows. The Household Name thing sort of came about

The boys laugh at Monk's rubbish questions

after Charlie passed on a copy of "Propeller" to Kafren (at a show of some kind). Both Lil and Kafren had some good things to say about the album and shortly after offered us a show down the big smoke with DILLINGER FOUR. It was our first decent show in London since being THE TAKE and we had a blast. It was then that Lil and Kafren kindly offered to put out our album (happy days) we then preceded to get a bit drunk, and that was that.

Jim - They wanted to check us out live first because they'd never seen us and HHN give the bands on their label the opportunity to go on the road as much as possible, so I guess they wanted to check just in case we were truly shocking live. As it turned out, we can't tour at the moment anyway because Will left. Which leads us onto the next question…

Fracture - *You're currently looking for a drummer, what happened to the one you had? It's quite a well known fact that Jim is a bit of a band whore when it comes to the Cardiff underground, what bands have you been in in all, and what did you do / do you do in each of them? How come you are so ridiculously musically "elastic"?*

Jim - Will decided to leave because he didn't have as much enthusiasm as the rest of us and couldn't really be arsed travelling 'round a lot, which is understandable. Plus we were all into practicing like, twice a week and he couldn't make it a lot of the time because of his other commitments, those being a family business and a daughter to look after. Fair enough, like.

Charlie - Finding a good drummer is proving very difficult but I haven't given up hope yet. What makes it really frustrating is that if Jim had four arms and superhuman cardiovascular fitness we'd be sorted! With cloning and genetic modification it might be a possibility!

Pete - Yes, Jim certainly does put it about a bit musically - he's like the musical Ron Jeremy of the 'Diff! You name a half decent Cardiff band from the last 5 years (30 yrs if you're talking about FOUR LETTER WORD) - and his fingers have been in there! Though I think we've all played a part to some inter-band incest at some stage. All good.

Fracture - *A couple of you have also hooked up with local promoter stud, Tom Willecombe, to form a band that lets him live out his dreams of rock stardom, that of BEDFORD FALLS. That band seems to currently be more active than THE TAKE right now, so how do the members of THE TAKE view their role in that band - ie. is BEDFORD FALLS as important as THE TAKE, or is it more of a "side project"? Now that Tom is 30 years old, and doesn't stop going on about it, is BEDFORD FALLS merely an outlet for his raging mid-life crisis?*

Jim - Yes.

Pete - I think so.

Charlie - I agree.

Tom - Fuck off bummers.

Fracture - *As Cardiff natives, how do you think things have changed in the locale in terms of underground music since you started out? Do you even remember the days of punk rock at The Philharmonic, on a Tuesday night? What was it that inspired you to form a band back then? Locally we had a lot of young bands starting out then - DOUG, PUBLIC DISTURBANCE and LOST PROPHETS to name but a few - did these bands have an effect on you at all?*

Jim - Yeah, those Philly Tuesdays were wicked! Cheap beer and good tunes. And the gigs in the bottleneck bar too, they

THE TA

THE THINGS THAT PEOPLE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED UNDER THE DIY "UMBRELLA" IN THIS COUNTRY AND ACROSS THE WORLD, OFF THEIR OWN BACKS, WITHOUT THE HELP OF MAJOR FUNDING, IS AMAZING.

were good. I don't know why they stopped doing stuff in that place, I guess the owners took a disliking to what was going on or something. I don't know how things have changed, I guess the people who were really feeling it then have stuck around and those that haven't are doing...whatever - as always happens with these things. There are still a lot of gigs happening these days too though, but I guess there's the influence of the major magazines coming into play and there seem to be a lot more bands popping up out of nowhere that aspire to mega rock stardom in the wake of what's happened in this region over the past couple of years. I mean, that's fine, it doesn't bother me like it does some other people because it doesn't affect what we do.

Charlie - Playing with bands like DOUG, SHOOTIN' GOON and PUBLIC DISTURBANCE inspired me in a practical sense. We knew them as friends and made contacts through them. This helped us to get gigs outside South Wales and gave us hope that we might make a mark in some way. Musically, most of the bands from South Wales at that time were quite different, which was cool. Variety spices things up! DOUG were closest to our wavelength and our incestuous relationship has thrived ever since.

Pete - Yeah, back then being a Cardiff outsider, it was cool to come down and see what was happening down here. I guess that inspired me personally to get on with being in a band. There was a quite a range musically from band to band which was good to see - saying that it's pretty much the same nowadays. I think you just get more used to seeing bands week in week out, then it makes it even better when you see a band that stands out I guess.

Fracture - *THE TAKE have also formed quite a few ties across the UK with their touring and gigs, do you think this is an important and essential part of being under the wide umbrella we call "the underground" here in the UK? Does knowing small bands, DIY promoters, small fanzine and label people make a difference to how the band views itself, or is that all just one big stepping stone to a much higher goal, the one of "success" on a more mainstream level?*

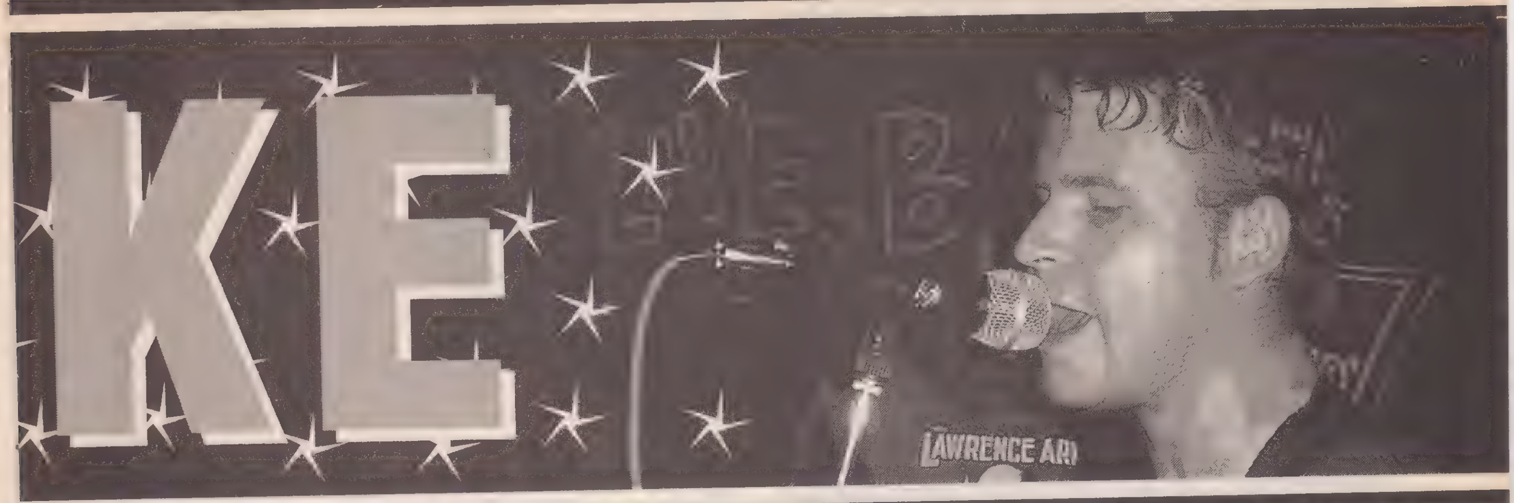
Charlie - We have been lucky enough to meet loads of good people through playing music. Bands, promoters, people who run independent labels and distros and not least, the kind hearted souls who let us sleep on their floors. Without these fine people we would never have had the chance to play gigs or tour at all, so yes, contacts, friends or whatever are vital to being in an independently minded band. We are lucky to have been able to play with some great "underground" bands. Very few get the recognition they deserve on any level! As far as the mainstream goes, it seems like a very superficial and unfriendly place to me. I think we are happier treating people as human beings and playing to people who have some concept of where we're coming from!

Jim - I think a good premise to live by is - never play a gig with or for someone who you couldn't go out and have a drink and / or a laugh with. The things people have accomplished under the DIY "umbrella", like you said, in this country and across the world, off their own backs, without the help of major funding, is amazing. Going to the Out Of Spite weekend in Leeds this year totally reaffirmed my faith in the worth of the whole thing. I went to the Reading festival a couple of weeks later and had a shit time. 'Nuff said. As for the issue of using it as one big stepping stone to mainstream success, I don't know, how are the Newest Industry advances looking these days? Haha!

Pete - Yeah, It's cool to be able to go away and play shows in different places for different promoters / collectives, meet nice people, people who buzz off the same things you do and appreciate what you're doing. It's nice to get to the stage where you establish a familiarity with certain scenes, bands etc. It's actually a good way to meet people, this band lark.

Fracture - *You toured with a couple of fairly well known US bands, including LAWRENCE ARMS and BELVEDERE from Canada, were these good experiences for tha band as a whole? How was the band treated by promoters - ie. were you as "valued" as the "bigger" bands you were supporting, or were you merely seen as second class citizens, along for the ride, lucky to just even be there? I guess you must have some "hilarious" stories about being on tour so, uh... tell us something funny that happened, like haha stuff. Haha.*

Pete - Going out on tour is always awesome if you ask me, I'm all about it. Firstly, the LAWRENCE ARMS tour was wicked - super nice blokes, proper good band with it too. We had a great time on that tour, it was the first time we had been out on a 'tour' as THE TAKE and gone to Scotland and stuff like that



so we were all stoked to be on that one. We also did a short tour with BELVEDERE earlier in the year, had some good shows on that too. Again an awesome band, quite different from ourselves but we all got on really well and had a good crack. There really wasn't a void between the "bigger" band and support in either case and there shouldn't be - It's not like we were opening for G'N'R or anything!

Jim - We weren't treated badly by any of the promoters because we were supporting. There were a couple of dodgy promoters who didn't appear to have done any promotion, but that's another story. I can't really think of any unique tour stories. Except for maybe one time, we were in Texas and Charlie took a slash against the Alamo… no wait, that was someone else. No, I can't really think of anything interesting apart from general drunken stupidity that a lot of bands get up to on the road. I'm sure our stories are lame in comparison. Sorry!

Fracture - *What are the best things about being a band from Cardiff for you? What about the worst things? There's definitely a lot of "industry" here, what with The Welsh Music Foundation, and bands getting "careers" through government schemes... bands like JARCREW being a prime example... do you think a band loses something when they're not doing things for themselves, or thinking for themselves, even? I know that THE TAKE maintains complete control of what it does and does not decide to do, but if things changed somehow, how would you feel about that? Will THE TAKE ever be winning an award on "The Pop Factory", like FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND and SAMMO HUNG? What about me?*

Charlie - I suppose we are lucky to be based here as it is a fairly large city with gigs happening regularly and plenty of venues to play. TJ's is just down the road too and we've had lots of fun playing and watching gigs there. I think people are what make any place good or bad, and most of the people I know here are safe as fuck! It can be hard to organise good DIY shows at times though because most venues are either too big and expensive or shit-holes with meat headed security.

Jim - People don't always turn out to gigs too so it can be quite disheartening. Tom (BEDFORD FALLS / Capillary Life) stopped putting on gigs because it seemed like a futile effort a lot of the time. Having said that, there are a few people interested in doing stuff, so all hope isn't lost…yet! As far as the Welsh Music Foundation goes, I guess that they're interested in the whole Punk / Hardcore thing right now because it's popular and all over the big magazines. I really can't see this band winning any awards of any kind! I went to the Pop Factory once when HUNDRED REASONS were on there. I didn't enjoy it mainly because they wouldn't let people smoke inside the studio even though they weren't letting people go outside during filming. Fascists. But yeah, the whole "bands not in control of their own destiny" thing - It's inevitable that some bands might lose something, especially when it's tied in with fashion and the current trends, BUT some bands actually WANT that and are happy to play along. All the best to them, it's not for me to judge. I don't want to come across like some DIY freak though because I listen to lots of stuff on majors.

Pete - There definitely seems to be some sort of industry / NME influence around Cardiff for sure, I guess you just leave other bands to do their thing and concentrate on what you are doing because that crap can get to you quite easily.

Fracture - *Finally, sign off with anything that you need to let the world know. Tell us a bit about your full length album "Propeller"... are you happy with the way it came out considering it's your debut album? What lies in store for THE TAKE?*

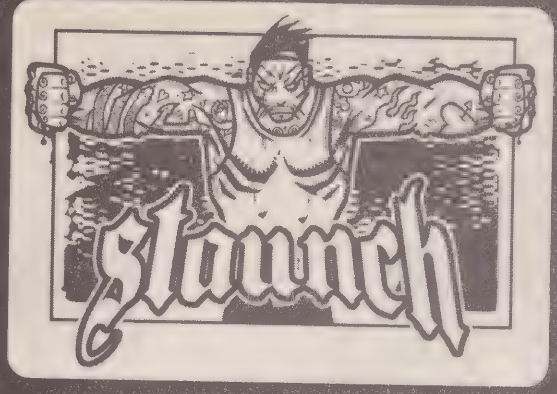
Jim - We recorded 'Propeller', our full length, in September 2001 at Prism in Stoke On Trent. I really like recording there because Shaun is really cool to work with and it's a pretty laid back atmosphere. We were in the middle of recording when 9/11 happened, so that was a bit weird and definitely something that'll make the whole time stick out in our minds. It was especially strange because Shaun had been doing sound for somebody in the World Trade Centre only the week before, so he was REALLY freaked out by the whole thing. The end result is something that we're really pleased with though.

Pete - It's been out for a while now so check it out and have a listen if you fancy. With playing live, it's kind of frustrating at the moment because it's not really possible to tour without a full time drummer but we're getting on the case with booking some one off shows at the moment so keep an eye out for us round your way and we'll see you there. That's about it for now, large props to our respective crews, everyone that has helped us so far and for bearing with us! Recognise.

Jim - I'm gonna sign off with this corny nugget : Appreciate what you've got while it's here because you'll really miss it when it's gone. I'm thinking really about the whole Fracture thing, because when Tom stopped doing Capillary Life over the summer, there were a lot of people who were suddenly saying stuff like *"Where's Capillary Life disappeared to? We need more shows around here!"* even though a lot of these people didn't show up when they had the chance. So come on people, put your backs into it! That is all, cheers Dave!

Charlie - Read Noam Chomsky. He will open your eyes!

>>> http://www.the-take.net



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K-LINE

INTERVIEW: DAVID STUART
PHOTOS: BERT QUIEROZ & JACQ

Harnessing no nonsense punk rock sentiments and the ability to come up with cracking songs, K-LINE have gained themselves a fair few fans already. Myself, being one of them. As well as being a great band musically, I consider these people friends. I've known James for ages and newest recruit Rich is one of my best friends. Having seen them numerous times, I have got to know Zac and Ed well and they are truly inspiring, funny and good people. I can't begin to fathom out what *"punk rock"* means these days, but the way these guys conduct themselves and their business, it feels right. They may not be spring chickens but they have more energy, enthusiasm and passion than most. I'm happy and proud to have these guys in the last ever issue of Fracture as they epitomise the punk rock values and ethics we believe in. They are an inspiration on every level.

Fracture - *Now the K-LINE project was around for a while with various folks before anything was recorded… how did the rest of you get involved?*

Zac - I met Ed at a wedding and I used to listen to the STUPIDS "Peruvian Vacation" on my paper round when I was a kid, so I had to say hi really… it turned out he needed a singer and drummer, and me and James were just about finished with a band that we could not get off the ground. We needed a guitar and bass player, so we joined forces and the name K-LINE had already been picked, we liked it, we rehearsed, did a STUPIDS cover and some CHOCOLATE songs and that was it…. we were go!

James - Zac was definitely the instigator in getting me involved in K-LINE. I'd known Ed and Paul since SINK days when I used to see them play a lot. I even interviewed them a few times for Metal Hammer magazine when I had a full time job there in the late 80s / early 90s. (In fact, come to think of it, I also sent Ed a STUPIDS interview for my fanzine when I was about 14. One of the questions I asked him was *"How much vinal have you got out?"* to which he answered, *"we have no vinal out."* Brilliant spelling error comedy!) Anyway, after Zac met Ed at the wedding he mentioned, as far as I remember, Zac was sent an email that also included Ed's address so Zac just decided to email him, see what he was up to. That's where it started. The three of us met up for strong coffee, got wired and sat there with our legs twitching discussing what we could do.

Paul - Ed's long term Bass Hand Man called up when needed. Not sure whether I've been beaten into submission or my attitude keeps Ed on his toes.

Rich - Sheer chance got me involved really, I was at the first Shoes all-dayer where K-LINE were playing and was talking to a friend of mine about how I wanted start playing again, as I had not done anything since GRAND CENTRAL had finished nearly two years earlier. He mentioned that K-LINE was looking for another guitarist. I'd not heard of them before but liked what I saw when they played, so I spoke to Ed and we organised to meet up and play some guitar. That seemed to go well and they haven't been able to get rid of me since.

Fracture - *Were you playing in bands at the time? What were your last musical projects before embarking on mission K-LINE?*

Zac - Me and James were in a band with Ashley Bird from Kerrang and Kev from CAPRICORNS very briefly.

Ed - Immediately prior to meeting up with Zac and James, Paul and I had been doing "K-LINE Part 1" with Scott Stewart and Paul Symes, but they had to leave 'cos of their DEAD INSIDE commitments and we were sort of stalled for about 6 months while we looked for fresh blood… so to speak. Before that I'd done a BIG RAY album and tour, and had been finishing up the final CHOCOLATE album. Paul had been on board for both of these too.

James - Me and Zac had a band together years ago which we had a great time doing. Since the premature end of the band, we'd sporadically tried to set up another band together and we were in the process of doing that when Zac got Ed on board and we got sucked into K-LINE!

Fracture - *Was it a little daunting joining a band with Ed involved? Given his experience and talent?*

Paul - I knew Ed before I knew about the STUPIDS. He kept his talent pretty well hidden in those days!

Zac - I must admit the first rehearsal when we were going through *"I Don't Wanna Get Involved With You"* was weird, because I was such a big fan of the STUPIDS that it felt strange trying to sing their songs, and that was my favourite one ever (its all about the gap in that song for me!)… but that was the only Ed band that I was really into, as I grew up with that sound and listened to them on my paper round! I saw SINK and CHOCOLATE live and they rocked, but the STUPIDS were always my favourite and still are… I loved the whole skate rock thing.

Ed - Which is funny 'cos that's one of my fave STUPIDS songs too. It was written before I joined though and we didn't play it much after, so it was fun to dust it off.

Rich - SINK was one of the first hardcore bands I got into after a friend at school did a tape for me with *"Can I Say"* by DAG NASTY on one side and some SINK stuff on the other, so it was weird to find myself playing in a band with P. Paul Sky and Ed Shred. Luckily they made me feel totally comfortable by constantly forgetting my name and laughing at me for not knowing what any of the chords are called.

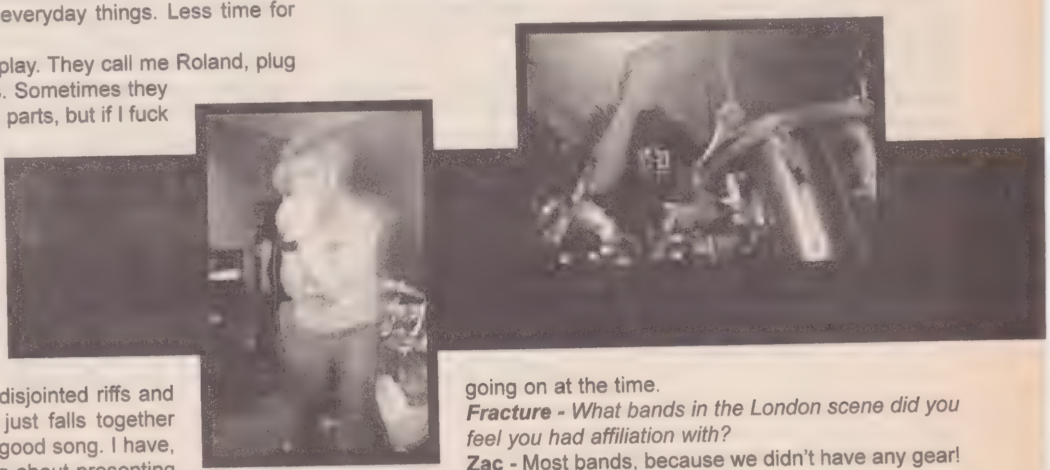
James - Not daunting, but the first few rehearsals were fun - I was a huge STUPIDS fan when I was at school and they were one of the first bands I used to go and see regularly at places like the Clarendon in Hammersmith - and that infamous HARD ONS / SCREAM show. I used to play those records to death and my first school punk band consisted mainly of STUPIDS covers so it was really weird to be sat in a practice space at 30 years of age jamming old STUPIDS songs with Ed and Paul, but I'm over it now!

Fracture - *Initially, how did the song writing process work? And how has it evolved as the band has gone on?*

Zac - Ed is riff creator, the band plays along with him to form some sort of structure and feel to rhythm etc. and I get to throw all my vocal harmonies around whilst they are jamming until I get something that I really like and feel comfortable with, then start to sing lyrics that don't make any sense for a couple of rehearsals and then I get bothered to write words and then the track is done… that is how it happens 90% of the time. It's a fast process though and we know when we are onto something pretty fast. We have an added member called Jeremy who helps us write but he is invisible and fictitious!

Ed - Yeah, I usually kick things off with a "verse-chorus-end bit" sequence which then gets polished and *'K-Lined'* by the others. Sometimes we finish the music and then Zac throws his stuff over the top, sometimes he gets involved right from the start and things change early on. It's a new process for me having a singer in the band who doesn't play an instrument and on balance it's working out really well as I think the songs are generally stronger because of it. On the other hand things can sometimes get "interesting" in the rehearsal room when I find the chorus is now the verse and the intro is the chorus and that we "need an extra chord in there somewhere" - it's my baby you're killing there singer dude! Paul, Zac and I all voice our opinions pretty strongly during song-writing while James and Rich hate confrontation and quietly get on with working out their parts while we're all sulking and talking over each other. Sometimes we'll drop a contentious song for a few weeks if it's going nowhere, but just about always we end up with something we're all happy with. Occasionally we don't actually see the lyrics till the day they're recorded, but like Zac says, sometimes we nail the whole thing so quickly that it's scary... that's when it's all worth it. As far as how its evolved... well, since Rich joined we've had more flexibility and a bigger sound that's for sure and I guess in the last 6 months we've written fewer songs 'cos we all seem to be getting busier and busier with everyday things. Less time for punk rock!

James - They just tell me what to play. They call me Roland, plug me in and programme in the beats. Sometimes they unplug me and let me play my own parts, but if I fuck up or get tired they plug in Roland. It sucks. No, but seriously, Ed comes in with a riff, we start jamming it, Zac finds a melody and starts singing whatever comes into his head and then it all just seems to magically come together. I don't really understand it myself. All these years later it's still a wonder to me. One minute you have a few disjointed riffs and beats, and then the whole thing just falls together and sometimes you have a really good song. I have, however, started seriously thinking about presenting some of my own songs to the band. What's the last thing a drummer says in any band? Do you fancy trying one of my songs?



Paul - I've always been into jamming and Ed's far more structured. Once Ed has taught me all his verse, chorus riffs and we've played them a few times, I get to experiment a bit (okay so everyone else just thinks I haven't learnt the parts yet and occasionally they could be right). When I think I've got something I throw it in and see if it sticks. Zac often comes up with great melody over and it ends up sneaking between Ed's riffs somewhere (e.g. *"Broken Holmes"*, *"Hostage to Finance"*, *"You Know We Know"*). Rich is really good at hearing other stuff that can be layered on top and quietly does a great job.

Fracture - *How long was it after the line up was complete before you played a show?*

Zac - Our first show was set up as the first ever Crossfire night as a 4 piece in September 2001 in Kensal Green West London, we got our first stuff together in April / May 2001, so fairly quickly.

Rich - After I joined, I think we had only 3 or 4 practices before we played at Dingwalls to about 200 people, needless to say I was fairly nervous. All I remember from the show is standing rigid in the middle of the stage with Paul trying to get into it and move around without knocking me over.

Paul - I remember that Dingwalls show. This guy Dave was on stage playing guitar and seemed to know some of the chords so I ignored him and got on with the show. It turned out that guy was Rich our new guitarist.

Fracture - *Even before you had anything released, you managed to play some London shows and get a lot of good feedback. Did you feel you'd created something that was a little different from what was going on at the time?*

Zac - Yeah, we played anything we could, sent those first demos out and got some supports to certain bands like MILLION DEAD, DEAD INSIDE, ICARUS LINE etc. But as for creating something different - nope, we were just having fun, that how I saw it, I really did not expect us to have records out at all. And we were just another crap punk band, so we were not trying to do anything different, it just came out like that. Same as right now really.

Ed - Yeah, I agree with Zac. I don't think we ever thought we were or are doing anything different to anyone else or even to what we've always done in previous bands. From a *"What kind of band are we?"* perspective anyway. I genuinely just wanted to get a band together and play some hardcore shows again. I missed it like mad. Possibly our only conscious decision along the lines of being a bit different was right from the start, James and I decided to concentrate on writing good songs (whatever they are) rather than making do with sub-standard shit; be it either half-finished or over-complicated.

James - Yeah, I see K-LINE as being really direct. So many bands get bogged down in playing little fiddly bits and trying to be really clever with their music - just generally over doing it. We just try to make sure our songs rock and are played with conviction and by people who are obviously really into the sound they're making. When we play live, it's obvious that we're really into what we're playing. You can see it in our faces and we all try and really throw ourselves into the songs and chuck ourselves about. So, in that respect I thought people would like us live and I knew the songs were good. You see so many bands who really don't rock out live. You wanna see some action onstage. There wasn't a lot of that going on at the time.

Fracture - *What bands in the London scene did you feel you had affiliation with?*

Zac - Most bands, because we didn't have any gear! Ha ha! Maybe DEAD INSIDE if anyone, just because they were playing a lot and were great energy. I miss that band. I saw The HORROR recently as they played one of my nights, and they are what it is all about, them and SEND MORE PARAMEDICS – but musically we have bugger all in common with either of them – I saw the end of the BULLET UNION gig the other day though, you should check them out.

Ed - Affiliation? Hmmm. Well, initially no-one, 'cos I didn't really know anyone. It had been a long time out of things for me and I wasn't sure who was who. But two years later I've got to know a lot of very cool people both inside and outside London and am feeling a genuine sense of community at gigs and on the Fracture forum etc. Like Zac though, I absolutely *loved* DEAD INSIDE and found them very inspirational. I even forgave Scott and Paul for bailing on K-LINE after I caught 'em at the Subterranea one night. One of the finest punk shows I'd seen for years. Of course I recently heard the SWING KIDS and that changed things a little, but to be honest I like DEAD INSIDE more and if you can take a great idea and improve on it then I'm on your side. It's bad copies that are a waste of everyone's time. These days I like BLOCKO 'cos they've got the same haircuts as Paul and me!

James - I'm afraid I'm going to have to say DEAD INSIDE as well. They had the energy and power that was missing from so many bands. We did a couple of our first gigs with them and their raw energy and power bowled us over. The UK was and still is awash with so many ska / emo / pop bands that it was great to see a UK band playing with that intensity. We were definitely inspired by them. Plus Kev's previous band HARD TO SWALLOW fucking ruled.

Fracture *- I reviewed the first demo for Fracture, I noted something about "An 80s DC sound mixed with AT THE DRIVE IN" – how did that sit with you? Was there a particular sound/style you took inspiration from?*

Zac - We were really confused about the ATDI thing. I think it was just the band of the moment as "Relationship Of Command" had been released, and journalists are generally lazy... you were just one of them! (*Note: I never heard that album properly, I was referring to their earlier material –* ***DS****)* Or maybe you were all correct but I did not see it at the time and still don't. The Dischord thing is spot on though - those bands on that label have been playing on my turntable since I first started getting into Punk Rock. Jeff Turner, 3, GRAY MATTER were a big influence on me personally but there are other bands like the DK's, BLACK FLAG, FUGAZI, BAD BRAINS, RUTS etc.

Ed - It's hard talking about influences 'cos I've been playing the same 3 chords for so long that I've forgotten who I stole 'em off in the first place! Funnily enough though I never liked Jeff Turner's stuff much apart from a couple of really amazing SENATOR FLUX songs. James and Zac are both big fans of 3 and GRAY MATTER, but I never saw the attraction. As guitarists, Vic Bondi, Brian Baker, Mike Hampton & Rikk Agnew have always featured large with me and the RUTS and RITES OF SPRING are in your basic *"don't leave home without them"* category when it comes to song writing. Also, to deny the influence of really obvious bands like FUGAZI would be plain stupid. It's weird, but after all these years I still don't think of Ian Mackaye as a guitarist in the first instance, but the guy has come up with some amazing shit over the years and it's definitely rubbed off on just about everybody, so credit where it's due. On the question of ATDI.... well, they were the first band for years that got me really excited and I like them a lot,

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James - I thought AT THE DRIVE-IN were stunning when they first came round. Amazing live band.

Ed - ...but I never saw the connection until the reviews started coming in. I mean I probably stole a couple of shapes from them here and there, but they were light years ahead of where we are, so I find the comparisons flattering, but a bit of a reach. Incidentally, ATDI sound a LOT like FUGAZI in my book so, thinking about it, maybe that's the ATDI / K-LINE connection.

James - Yeah, ATDI have inspired some crummy shit, but they did some great stuff, so to be compared to them is flattering. Although I don't think we do, or even could sound anything like them. We're way more 'straight-up punk', that's gone a bit wonky! Bang on with the DC inspiration though. I was also listening to a lot of eighties hardcore at this point, especially early-DC stuff - I really wanted to get some of that vibe and energy into the sound, which I think we have done with some of the faster, more hardcore songs on the album. We did rehearse a cover of RED C's "Pressure's On" from "Flex Your Head" but it sounded sucky when we played it!

Paul - Influences? I've got 4 strings and only use two of them! I can't pick, so I pretty much limit myself to playing in time - Note to band: I never mentioned playing the right notes.

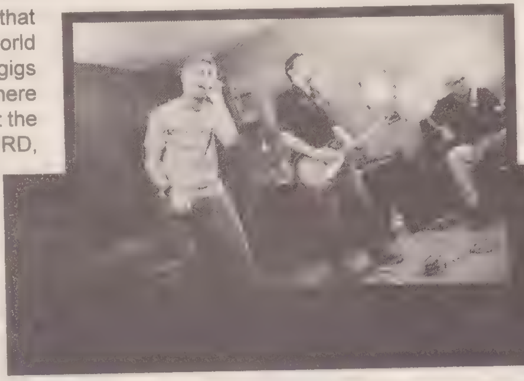
Fracture *- You are all experienced musicians, we now know all about Ed's past. What about the others? And while you're there... the old chestnut – how / when / why did you align yourselves with punk rock?*

Zac - Everyone else was in bands that toured apart from me I think. James and I had a band called FREELOADER back in college days in 1990, we did MINOR THREAT style punk rock with very melodic vocals and played a few shows. Other than that, I got to bust out a vocal track on a DONE LYING DOWN track called "Song for Freeloaders" on their 2nd album, but that was it really. I was introduced to punk rock through skateboarding and skate videos in particular. All those old Santa Cruz videos – JFA, BLACK FLAG, CIRCLE JERKS etc. I owe my entire life to 4 wheels! BAD BRAINS were one of the first hardcore bands I ever saw live with HR on vocals, I was hooked after seeing that, it was explosive... that history helps our live performances as I think as we have all seen some of the best hardcore bands ever along the way, and those bands wrote great songs and had the best live shows packed with chaos.

Rich - When I moved to London I played in a couple of Croydon based bands, the first had a terrible name and pretty much went by the STUPIDS adage of; if a song doesn't work keep playing it faster and faster until it no longer matters if you change chord or not. We couldn't really play or write songs, but had a laugh and got to play some fun shows with other Croydon bands like TOAST and one memorable one at the Rock Garden with an Israeli death metal band who started their set in total darkness with samples of Hitler speaking, a spotlight then illuminated the singers face as he screamed *"I'm going to rape your mind"* before embarking on some of the dirtiest heaviest electric cello playing I for one have ever witnessed. You try following that with some light hearted ska-punk! When that finished our drummer moved onto vocals and we started GRAND CENTRAL, the basic tenet of which, was to try and play as many notes in as short a time as possible. We recorded two EP's but didn't play live very often, mostly due to our high turnover of drummers. Eventually though people seemed to start liking us and a label offered to put out an album of our stuff. We of course grabbed this opportunity with both hands by breaking up and not speaking to each other for about 6 months. Seriously though I regret that it ended as it did, before we managed to get an album out or tour properly. Since then I haven't been playing in bands but have been at home writing hundreds of songs, each more complicated and un-listenable than the last, much to K-LINE's dismay.

Paul - As well as being old, I'm old school too. Everyone I knew had older siblings who were into LED ZEP, STONES and the BEATLES. It just didn't do it for me. One track stood out though - "Polythene Pam" on "Abbey Road", it was raw and had attitude. From there it was a question of finding more. Finally punk reached Portsmouth and my Gran bought me "The Crack" by THE RUTS for Christmas. Then it was sneaking out of school at lunchtime buying albums as they were released; "Inflammable Material", "Another Music In A Different Kitchen", "No More Heroes", "Seventeen Seconds", "Machine Gun Etiquette", "Stations Of The Crass" and so on. The first band I formed was at school with Paul Cox (of Sausage Machine, Too Pure and Artrocker fame) - we had a blast but was also the start of my history of losing drummers, when Pete Yearworth had a motorcycle crash. I hooked up with Ed when I became a STUPIDS roadie, and despite being left off every thanks list (the bastards!) I managed to join SINK when Ed kicked it off.

James - I've been forming bands both imaginary and real since I was a little kid! All the way through school and stuff I was always forming bands with names like SEPTIC DISCHARGE, SCUM CHILDREN, TONE DEFF - stuff like that. Great fun, bashing away on instruments we couldn't play, but having so much fun. The SCUM CHILDREN played some gigs and high points included a review in Maximum Rock'n'Roll and a gig with 2000 DIRTY SQUATTERS! Then I did a band called FREELOADER with Zac and we did some great stuff that wasn't a million miles away from K-LINE in that it was DC hardcore inspired with direct riffs and energy. Unfortunately we stopped doing it before we got to put anything out and play many gigs. After that, I joined DONE LYING DOWN for four years and got to make some records and do a lot of touring. I had the time of my life with some awesome people and it ruled. Did some other bands with friends that gigged here and there, played some gigs with Croydon's legendary TOAST. That was great fun - got to play with some killer bands, play fast bratty punk and watch Spencer stir everyone one up from a safe seat at the back! Originally I got into punk through metal. I used to love all the thrash stuff in the mid-eighties. METALLICA, EXODUS, MEGADETH, VENOM - all that stuff! I used to see those bands wearing T-shirts by bands like BLACK FLAG, FEAR, SEX PISTOLS, GBH and the MISFITS so I checked out those bands and found punk rock salvation. As I dug deeper, I got into all the anarcho CRASS, SUBHUMANS, CONFLICT style stuff and through that found the DIY scene. The whole world of fanzines, distros, backroom gigs opened up and I was hooked. There was some great hardcore bands at the time as well like HERESY, RIPCORD, NAPALM DEATH, ELECTRO HIPPIES. Good times.



***Fracture** - "In The Red" EP was the first release. It was on Boss Tuneage, but wasn't there interest from other labels? Why did you decide to go with BT?*

Zac - I'm pretty sure that no one else had been in touch about the first one. Ed and Aston go back years, we were stoked when he mentioned in an email that we were gonna get a record out! Still stoked - nothing's changed there!

Ed - I'd been in touch with Aston about BIG RAY and CHOCOLATE and had mentioned that I was in a new band. His ears pricked up right away and he basically said he'd love to do a single or something when we were ready. A sort of, *"talk to me before you talk to anyone else"* deal. It works for me... I'm genuinely touched that anyone wants to put our stuff out. Nothing is taken for granted in this band.

James - Aston reviewed my first band demo in his fanzine 'Intense Grind'. It didn't get a very good review, but I've forgiven him now.

***Fracture** - Around this time you added a second guitarist... cue Richie! Now I remember him being very nervous about trying out and he was worried about not being good enough to play with Ed especially.*

Ed - Good enough to play with me! Ha ha, that is hysterical. The guy is amazing and I spend my whole time trying to keep up with him. Big up the Matthews Massive. Downstroke City. Wrists like Popeye AND he has a girlfriend!

***Fracture** - Obviously he impressed... tell us a little about how Richie came to be the fifth member.*

Ed - What happened was Rich and I both knew Paul Symes and he hooked us up after I emailed him asking if he knew anyone in London who played guitar like he did. I'd started to feel that we needed another guitarist in the band to really let the songs come into their own. Right from Paul's reply I was pretty sure that Rich was a good choice 'cos he said Rich's fave band was ARTICLES OF FAITH. Since I thought I knew every AOF freak in the UK personally it was cool to find that there was another out there. Also, his Marshall / Gibson setup and how low he played his 'axe' were taken into consideration at the time. Despite wanting to use my Tele all the time recently and the fact that his Les Paul is bright white, he really can't be faulted on the gear front.

Paul - After the first rehearsal with Rich, I remember telling Ed how good I thought he'd be in the band once we had broken him in and taught him to play *"our"* way!

Ed - By the way, Zac calls Rich 'Dave' a lot of the time. This confuses everyone else and we think it's funny. It has something to do with Zac thinking Rich looked like Dave Grohl the first time they met... which he doesn't obviously, but since it's just the two of them in their house I don't suppose it matters much **what** Zac calls him.

***Fracture** - What has he added to the band?*

Ed - First off, the type of stuff we play is not rocket science and despite what people may say about punk rock having no rules, there quite clearly ARE rules of sorts when it comes to what's going to work in a song and what isn't. Obviously it's all pretty subjective, but the great thing about Rich is that he seems to know exactly what's called for and when to use it. It's brilliant being in a band with a guitarist I can rely on all the time.

Zac - Dave, or Rich, as I sometimes call him is cool as fuck... he has the best style of guitar playing I have seen, brings shitloads to the band and he works well with Ed and Paul. I remember the first ever rehearsal we all had together, he brought in a riff to go over the top of the chorus of "Worth More Than a Name" which was so good. I remember getting eye contact with James as that riff came in and have never forgotten that moment....

***Fracture** - Had any of you seen / heard his last attempt at a band, that of GRAND CENTRAL?*

James - I saw Rich's band once, when they supported BLUETIP in London. Right from the start we'd talked about getting another guitarist as two guitars is plainly better than one. Rich instantly thickened out the sound and added another edge. He even rocks out onstage now as well. He's developed the *"Rich Twitch"*. Watch him and learn.

Zac - I never saw GRAND CENTRAL but we now live together in Ghost Cottage and we had a night in listening to our old bands the other day and their vocalist was a tad monotonous but good musically.

***Fracture** - Now despite the fact that you are older than most of the bands around these days, you have an enthusiasm and drive that shines through. What fuels that fire?*

James - It's just still so fucking much fun to play punk rock. That's all it's about for me. The same as Ed, I really missed playing live and appreciate the energy release of a good gig more now than ever. We're not teenagers anymore, we've all got various pressures in our lives, far more than when we were young, so a gig for us now is even more of a release than when we were teenage. Back then you were just high on the energy - now that half an hour release keeps me sane! It makes all the effort of being in a band worth it. That's why we still do it. Nothing else gives you the same buzz as the feelings you get when you're having a great writing session and really getting off on playing that new bit. Or when a gig's going great and you're just lost in your own world and into playing. Or when you get your new record back and you spend ages just looking at it, staring into the vinyl. It's those moments of escapism and euphoria that we're looking for and every now and then you find them with punk rock.

Ed - Yeah, James and I have talked about this a lot. The thing is he and I still LOVE playing gigs and get a serious buzz from being onstage playing hardcore again. I can lose myself for half an hour, jump up and down, scream and shout, heckle the audience, play a bit of guitar, watch Zac go mental. Fuck yeah! I guess by the mid 90's I'd ended up doing music as a job pretty much and I'd got too jaded so I stopped doing gigs. Then after a few years out of it I missed playing like crazy and once I moved back to London K-LINE was born. Now every gig is played as if it's my last and it makes 'em more enjoyable. Like I said before, nothing gets taken for granted... if we come across as energetic on stage then maybe it's down to that.

Paul - I'm still going for it like I was when I was 16, although now I can't quite keep it up as long as I used to.

Zac - A youthful audience fuels me personally. Most new young bands seem have no memorable songs, no energy, not all of them but a lot of them, but that is just experience... this whole emo thing is bollocks, it has nothing to offer, it's like the new bad indie, kids feeling sorry for themselves warbling into a mic, it's so sad to watch, it has nothing to do with punk. Not being a twat here, but really young kids don't really know what has hit them when K-LINE come off stage as they are used to much softer music in live sets, and that is a massive compliment to us all, because sometimes the kids at the shows are soo young that it makes us feel old, so we rock even harder just to prove a point that old fuckers can kick ass to! We are all influenced by the good old days and the good old days provided so much energy. Playing live rules.

***Fracture** - What have been the high points so far and have you hit any low points?*

James - High points have been actually getting through the first year still a band while we all got comfortable with each other's personalities! Getting the album finished and seeing the finished copies. And a gig in Kingston where I thought we seriously tore it up. Having no gear is definitely a low point. I did actually used to have a drumkit but it got trashed and abandoned a couple of years pre-K-LINE. Now I have a snare, a kick-drum pedal and some cymbals that used to belong to much-missed SINK drummer Kermack and some drum sticks I found in the rehearsal room bin. Thankfully most bands are very generous in letting us borrow gear. One day we'll have something to lend back, we promise!

Zac - Hi points: Jamming with James and finally doing a real band together, recording the album with Roop. Having Rich on board. Playing every live show - it's what we crave - and having to put up with Ed and Paul as they are sometimes like the two old geezers from the Muppet Show; rehearsals are great fun when they are on one! Top geezers! Seeing an album for sure – what a trip! Low points: My good friend Simon Spencer passing away whilst I was in the middle of doing my vocal sessions for this album, having to borrow gear at every gig! Other than that, nothing, 'cos this is great fun.

Ed - High points have been certain songs and certain gigs... like always. Also, I love the hanging out and meeting people bit as the HC scene has always had its share of cool people. Low points would be Zac's reaction to the first single, all of the frustrations over the length of time it took to record the album and only getting to play half a set in Ipswich – not quite the victorious homecoming I'd imagined!

Paul - There have been many high points. We played a gig near Reading and I got carried round the pub - just like the old days - except now it needed 5 people to lift me up. Having a streaker on stage at The Verge was a first. Growing *a "Baldhican"*. Punking it up with Ed again and being in a band that I think is writing some great stuff. Low points? Well, like Ed I can't believe the album took so long to do and sometimes the others forget that "I'm always right!".

***Fracture** - London gets a lot of criticism when it comes to punk rock... from having too many shows to being apathetic. What are your views on this and London as a city to be based in?*

Rich - To criticise London for having too many shows is bizarre to say the least. One of the things I most enjoy is seeing live bands and so by my thinking the more shows there are the more bands I can see. It would probably be good if promoters talked more to each other so shows didn't clash but that is a problem everywhere not just London. I think the classic misconception people have is that the hardcore scene in London is any different from those anywhere else. London is obviously a very large city but that does not automatically mean that there is going to be exponentially more people into hardcore here than in Leeds or Southampton or wherever else. When bands play in London though I think sometimes they are surprised to find that basically hardcore in London is as small and underground as it is everywhere else in the world. This can lead to the accusation that our scene is apathetic as I sometimes think that bands really believe that all over London hundreds of hardcore kids are sitting at home too lazy or spoilt to support the shows or are in some way actively avoiding them. This of course just isn't true, again as with everywhere else people have lives and commitments; they just can't make every show. That is not to say that there isn't a great scene here as there are loads of great bands and dedicated people putting on shows, doing fanzines, running distros and independent labels and record shops etc etc. It's a good scene just don't assume it's anything more than it is.

Paul - London is London, where else can you go to great gigs every night, walk by the Thames and throw eggs at an American in a glass box?

Zac - Most of the album's lyrics are based on that City. We are all spoilt in London, we have too much of everything, and also people are more relaxed out of town. No offence to people in London, but crowds actually move outside of London, its so different and much more enjoyable. But I could not live anywhere else unless it had a beach, as being spoilt is sometimes cool. I cannot wait until people are flying off the stage at our shows, that is when our live set really works best – I personally get off on it. The more people react, the more to the edge we will take it live. But as people discover what we are up to, I'm sure it will come, I am just not very patient!

James - The problem with a lot of the gigs we play is that in London, they tend to be "scene" gigs which generally attract an older crowd. Most of the young kids who still have the energy to leap around at shows are into their favourite boy-hardcore mall-punk band. As you get older you don't feel the need to thrash it out down the front every night - you tend to have a drink and watch the band. It's hard to criticize London crowds for not dancing when most of us don't do it ourselves. The last time I slam-danced at a gig was POISON IDEA and I got very tired and had to sit down and have a breather and a go on my inhaler after one song. Mosh it up! But when you get out of town, the crowds seem to get younger and they're definitely fun to play to - although it can be weird playing to a crowd half your age. But fuck it, who cares? The fact is, there are always a lot of great gigs on in London week in and week out. I love going to gigs and watching bands. I just can't help it.

Ed - I guess Zac's the front-man so he feels these things more keenly than the rest of us, but I'd just say there's a big difference between an audience of some kind of seriously-into-it-but-not-dancing people and a group of punters who aren't interested. I personally love playing in London as the gigs are easy to get to and I know a lot of people at the show. When out of town gigs really kick off it's a massive buzz, but it's also depressing going to Derby to play in front of 5 people because it takes a lot of effort to get us all there.

James - This music stuff, it's an addiction you know and London's a good place to get your fix. There's lots of great people doing good things in the London punk scene, there's always good stuff going on.

Fracture - *Zac, you also run CROSSFIRE promotions and fanzine… tell us about this and why you do it please.*

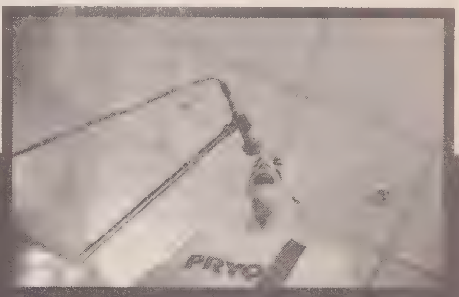
Zac - Well, I run Division Promotions, which fuels Crossfire. I did my corporate stint as an A&R man for 5 years and signed the most fucked up records I could find. I wasn't down with Britpop and I did not fit into their world, but I learned as much as I could. I then had responsibility at peoplesound.com where I learned a lot about the web. Then I figured that I had been loving skateboarding for 16 years and still loving new music, so I thought I would throw them together as a one-off club night and now two years later I'm still doing it and have an office and shit. It makes me get up at 7.30am every morning and keeps my mind fresh and creative. I want to provide entertainment for people that like to party, it's all about the malarkey and live shows and big promoters generally just put on the bands, make their money and kick everyone out. I believe that I am changing that and providing people with an alternative. But there is more going on than just gigs. The Bus Trips are so much fun, the skate jams are heavily likened to the 80s way of doing stuff which kids don't have anymore, they are just given over-produced rubbish and fed crap, and overcharged for the privilege. Also, if I can find a band that I love and feel as though they should be playing in front of a bigger audience, I can help them do that. I know I would rather play in front of 400 people than some crap gig with 4 people and believe me we have done both! James is now running our new Division PR dept for labels such as Coalition Records, In At the Deep End, Newest Industry and more, and that is just another addition to what we are creating. I love all styles of music too, so it's not just about punk rock and most people have diverse record collections… I like to introduce stuff to people and bring people together I suppose. But overall, it beats working for some dickhead and dressing up in some retarded uniform for a living! Check it all out at and send us demos and stuff to review or write for us… I need more writers!

Fracture - *What do you do as day jobs and do your working commitments affect the band at all? I heard you are a little lax when it comes to practicing! Are you going to be able to get a tour together sometime soon?*

Paul - Lax at practicing? After playing for this long I don't need to practice! Working and being in a band is actually good in some ways. Mainly as we now have some money there's less pressure to find cash to buy food and beer, pay for petrol and studio time. The downside is trying to get everyone off at the same time to do a tour of some sorts.

Rich - I record bands for a living and am often on long sessions, which makes it difficult sometimes to do the band, but as I am freelance I can arrange work around the band to some extent. Touring is hard because of both work and family commitments but we have plans afoot to do some shows in Europe and will try and get to as many places in the UK as we can. We aren't the best band for practicing, I think I have still played more shows than had practices, but now the album is done we have to start writing more songs for some singles we are planning.

Zac - My Crossfire jams always run at weekends, so they get in the way but only sometimes. We all try to work in advance to get stuff done together as the band has a priority, but we try to practice at least once a week or do something K-LINE related but because of recording album this summer was spent making sure we had a



great sounding record. I would take a week out for a tour – book me in!

James - It's not working commitments that affect the band for me, it's having my own family. I've got a son of three and my daughter was born just two days ago. I was lucky to be able to do a lot of touring with DONE LYING DOWN throughout my twenties so I got a lot of that out of my system then. I'm in K-LINE because I still love playing and being in a band, but I couldn't tour for any length now. Although touring can be the best fun in the world, it's also something you have to do to sell your band and can suck as well. Since K-LINE is not a career band, and we decided that very early on, it cuts out a lot of the pressures of having to sell ourselves and succeed and makes it much more fun. Although it's definitely more than a hobby, it's not all there is in our lives. That said, I'm sure we'll be doing as many gigs as we physically can without it fucking up our personal lives. My work is very flexible so I'm quite free to juggle everything around and somehow make it work. Ever since I got a job at Metal Hammer after I did a work experience there at school, I've always written reviews and features for various magazines and still do stuff for Kerrang! I've also worked at a few music publicity companies over the years so, as Zac said, I'm working on that. I look after my son a lot as well while my partner works, which I enjoy more than anything. This all means that I'm not stuck to a rigid nine-to-fiver where you have to beg to get time off.

Ed - We have that classic combination of two people who have jobs with fairly traditional working lives – Paul and I are both *"salary man"* computer nerds – and three others who keep totally different hours so it sometimes means there's often very little time for the band. On top of that we all have pretty busy personal lives so actually it's a wonder we've managed to get this far. On the subject of rehearsals; it's not the frequency that's the problem, it's more the fact that we're not always all there at the same time!

Fracture - *The "Lessons Learned" EP did pretty well, but I recall some members being a little unhappy with the production… why was that?*

Rich - Before I joined the band their plan was to put an album out after the first EP, but because I joined when I did we weren't ready for that and so decided to put out another EP instead. I was working a lot during the recording and so did my parts very quickly and was never really happy with how I played, which is why I wanted to re-record *"Worth More…"* for the album. I think as well that we all got a little precious about it and got hung up on things that weren't really problems at all. Personally though I prefer the sound of the vinyl, but then I always do.

It's those moments of escapism and euphoria that we're looking for and every now and then you find them with punk rock.

Zac - The production was fine. John Hannon did a great job in a small amount of time and that record rocked. I was disappointed with our first release, "In the Red" (not "Lessons Learned"), as it sounded like a demo to me, but we don't have the budgets to afford to buy us more time to record these records. I set my standards too high sometimes; it will be my downfall eventually. But we made up for it with the album, we love it and Roop did a great job.

Ed - Just about the biggest problem for me with K-LINE was getting used to recording with Zac. I've honestly not experienced anything like it before. His approach and reactions to sessions / mixes / production etc. are very different to mine. It's not that he's necessarily wrong either, so I'm not just having a pop... we just approach things 100% differently to each other and that can be very taxing for both of us. John Hannon's production on "Lessons Learned" was fine - great even - and I'm really pleased we did it with him 'cos he and I go back and I really, really like him. The mix was a bit unexciting though, so Rich and I went to another studio with Roop and remixed it. I'm now very happy with it. In fact I'm happy with all of our releases. There's stuff I'd change on all of them too obviously, but that's what sets you up for the next one.

James - I'm glad Zac likes the album. It was a real disappointment when he wasn't that into our first single, as you want the whole band to love it and be really behind and into it. He's a bit of a perfectionist though and had a firm idea of how it should sound in his head! I think both singles are damn good first efforts, but the LP just clicks and kicks.

Fracture - *One of the best sets I saw you guys play was at Dingwalls in Camden... this was a strange gig, due to venue and the appearance of HOT ACTION COP – Zac set this up and it was an amazing night, very successful on every level... what was the score with that night?*

Zac - Yeah, that show was great, we had played 3 in a row with The UNKNOWN which was the best time ever. It was as if we had finally got our shit together in those 3 shows and played with more confidence than ever, in fact there is a great video on the interactive CD from that show. HOT ACTION COP was my decision. They wanted to play a Crossfire show as they needed a crowd to play in front of, and I made their label pay for the entire night, so that everyone got in for free. Aston merged his Boss Tuneage night into it so that he did not have to lose or gamble any money, everyone got paid, and everyone had a great night out. Sometimes those things have to happen to give something back to people. I would do all Crossfire shows for free if I could and I will again in the future. If I have money to do it, I will do it all the time.

I like to aggravate the audience so they join in, I fucking hate being watched from a bar, I would rather be sat at home.

James - I got to DJ that night and got to play "Too Much Music & Too Many Bands" by ANNALISE just as HOT ACTION COP came out onstage. They were the ultimate example of a major label attempting to sell complete crap and seeing if it would stick. They were such utter shit, like BLOODHOUND GANG or something and we'll probably never hear from them again, but we had a great night. That ANNALISE song summed them up nicely.

Fracture - *Zac is a pretty aggressive front-man; confrontational and angry. Have you received any comments about this? I love it, so many bands are sedate and user-friendly these days so it's nice to see a little passion... does it ever cross the line and cause you concern? It certainly seems to fire the other members up... would you agree?*

Zac - It's the way I get my frustrations out on the world, it's such a crass place, I get pissed off and relish the chance to let my aggression out on people who want to share that and get it out themselves. I think it works both ways. I have crossed the line once or twice with a few comments... I like to aggravate the audience so they join in, I fucking hate being watched from a bar, I would rather be sat at home. These people spend money to see entertainment, and we pack the shows with just that. It's the old school way, the only way.

Paul - I can't complain when Zac jumps off the stage... it gives me room to get to the front to leap around. I do recall one show when Zac left the stage and was running about. One girl who was politely tapping her foot and nodding her head - Zac went right up to her and screamed in her face and she nearly leapt out the window in fright. Once a girl deservedly slapped him for wiggling his arse at her. So basically we get a real laugh watching and joining in all the antics.

James - Nothing Zac does or says surprises me anymore. I've known him for well over ten years and we've had some mad experiences together. I'm far more laid back than he is and together it works well. Mad things just always seem to happen around him and you get sucked into them. I could fill page after page with Zac stories, but I'll save them for the book! It definitely fires us up having him be the way he is onstage. Because we've spent a long time trying to get a decent band together, we often get eye-contact onstage and grin at each other like *"fuck, yes, we've finally got a great band!"* It's always a good moment.

Ed - It freaked me out to start with and, to be honest, I thought he was hamming it up, but I've come to realise that going mental like that is just how he is. He is being 100% genuine and he's 100% into it. Now I love it and really enjoy sharing a stage with The Silver Fox. He has this whole *"daily grind"* thing which he rants on about and apparently being on stage helps get all of it out of his system which is why he goes so mad. Since he works for himself and is his own boss I've always been confused by why he has such a shit time at work, but if it makes him go mental onstage then it's fine by me!

Fracture - *The album "How You Gonna Scare Us Now?" came out in September. It took 5 months to put together, how come?*

James - Didn't it take METALLICA three weeks just to load their gear into the studio? I don't think five months is that bad, it's not quite up to DEF LEPPARD's standards! Most of that five months wasn't spent recording, most of it was spent trying to get everyone in the studio at the same / right time while we all had to get on with our lives, and try and finish this album we'd started. My partner was also pregnant so there was a lot going on at home for me. The album was released the day before my daughter was born so it beat her by one day!

Zac - Other commitments, making sure we had Roop available, money, time etc...but it was worth it. Finally we actually spent some time recording. The 2 EP's were so rushed, but captured what we did in that time frame, but we wanted to make sure we spent a little more time on it for the album; it meant that I could finally add some backing harmonies and beef up the sound a bit with hooks etc.

Paul - Aaarrrgggghhhh. The next one will be done with German efficiency, a Japanese production line and Tony Blair's, *"We're* *gonna do this if it kills us all"* attitude!

Ed - You know, in actual recording time we only spent 5 days on the music and another 8 (I think) sessions doing the vocals. The fact that it took over 5 months to fit in those 13 sessions is insane, but there were reasons for it at the time and now I'm just glad it's finally finished and in the shops. We're all super happy with enough of the album to be really proud of what we achieved and just unhappy enough with the rest of it to want to get right back in there and do it again next year! I'm gutted I didn't get time to do more backing vocals, but I think Roop did an amazing job on the recording and the majority of the songs have come out really well. It was also awesome that our man Bloody Kev stepped up and laid down some serious throat on two tracks.

Fracture -*. Tell us about the album, talk us through some of the tracks, what they're about, how they came about and so forth.*

Zac - "Stoical Souls" with Bloody Kev on board is a good one to start with. I wrote the lyrics and plot to that on a beach in Bournemouth on the hottest day of the year ever, the day before we recorded it, very last minute but I wanted to make it different to all of the other tracks. It was great writing for Kev... I could hear him all over it... the story of that track lyrically is this. James and I had a friend who became a junkie, ended up killing a disabled guy in his house for money by stabbing him 52 times, slit his throat and cut his genitals off. I play the role of the killer, Kev plays the killers conscience. Enough said! Lyrics to "Hostage to Finance" were written in the car on the way back from the same beach on the day they were put to tape... I am so fucked off with seeing lazy rude boys steal shit and treat this planet like a fucking whorehouse. So I decided to delve into the psychology of why they are like that and I realised that it is this democracy that fuels it, and that we are all just as bad individually as the rest sometimes and that we all have to conform to a certain way of living, otherwise we all get fucked in the ass and have to be wankers to get through life. Money talks miles, boredom creates unstable behaviour and we are all hostage to it. But if you work hard and have to put up with outspoken little twats who believe it is their right to have no respect for anything or anyone, then you become as bad as them and my temper does not allow me to just chill on this stuff. I explode. I did recently, this guy shouted at me through his window of his car *"are you not too old to be riding a skateboard you cunt?"* – he sped off, got trapped by a bus at a junction – so I caught him up, smashed his car up with my skateboard and whacked him through the window! He came round the block after in shock with a bruise on his face and apologised, and in my rage of telling him he was damn rude to expect a stranger to just take abuse like that, I tell him that I have enough on my plate to get on with than to deal with his bullshit. And he then he asks me if I have had a bad week and do I wanna talk about it! I mean what the fuck?!!! This is the world we live in! I am generally not a violent person and would never start on someone for the hell of it, please do not think I am proud of this encounter, it just happened and I flipped!

Ed - I like the harder songs more than the poppy ones in general. I am proud of "Hostage To Finance" as it's probably the closest we've come to an AOF vibe at any point to date and Rich does the amazing double chug Vic Bondi / reggae thing at the end. Mark Swinney told me last night that he thought it sounded like JOY DIVISION's "Love Will Tear Us Apart" which is weird, but I can see his point.

Zac - "The Escape" is related to this problem; cities are fucked. The pollution, the people, the battle to stay fit, and the constant rat race fight and how the city will eventually kill you.

Ed - I like cities, although I do see where Zac's coming from. I lived in the country for a couple of years before 1998 and deliberately moved back into London because I missed it. One thing's for sure though, a big city is no place to be if you're broke.

Zac - "Broken Holmes" is self-explanatory. Jack Shit is actually me. My parents split up and since then my Dad has never made an effort to keep in touch with me or my brother and sister. It hurts to know that someone made an effort to bring me in to this world and then gave up... what a waste. I am hurt from that and always will be, and that is another reason why things get aggressive live. That is our only "emo" song!

Ed - ... and a most excellent lyrical outing from The Silver Fox. Musically there's loads of Rikk Agnew / Brian Baker style octave guitar parts and a big NAKED RAYGUN chorus.

Zac - I think there were a few older songs that were upgraded in the studio with new melodies etc and different structures like "Money Tree", "Stoical Souls" and "Bikini Black Alpha" and they have been refreshed really. The lyrics to "Bikini Black Alpha" were written after September 11th in NYC when the City was on high alert. They were all songs we were never 100% happy with and slowly they sneaked out of the live set, but thankfully they have been resurrected and they now rock!

Ed - I'd always rated "Money Tree" and "Bikini Black Alpha", so I'm glad we polished them up for the album. The main "BBA" riff was "strongly influenced" by a RAIN song called "In Rivers" – which should be obscure enough for no-one else to spot – and I'm really proud of the middle section as it's not a typical "Ed" guitar part.

Zac - "The Circuit" is based on a girl that stalked me for a while. It led me to have Bells Palsy for 7 months with the stress of it all, so my face had a mild stroke, it was that time when I realised that I had to do things alone and start Caught In the Crossfire, it was the only way to get all my angst out. I love that track. That is the one that people compare to ATDI. "Money Tree" was inspired by the montage art of a friend of mine called Winston Smith who lives in San Francisco. He was responsible for the DEAD KENNEDYS artwork, who are my favourite band ever I think. Check his stuff out, he is a genius and one of the nicest guys ever. When I was sick, he sent me a 5 page video game idea and we spent a lot of time emailing each other story lines and ideas for the game, if it ever comes to life it will be the biggest thing ever, kids will go mental for it! I really wanted him to do the sleeve artwork, but Ed decided he could do his own version, and did a great job all the same.

Ed - For HC fans, there's a bit of an ADOLESCENTS tribute near the end. I'm a big Rikk Agnew fan - as I've already mentioned - so it's cool to throw in references here and there for people to pick up on.

Zac - "Count It Down" is based on the build up to the Iraq War. That song is an injection of fine tuned hatred aimed at the civilisation we live in and how one person can pull a media trigger that activates a state of world chaos. Bush is the biggest cunt the world has ever seen, Blair is in his own world of shit right now too, I hope they get done for War Crimes because it seems as though they are running the gauntlet now.

Ed - Musically this one totally does it for me. I'm chuffed sick with the way it came out. Three parts that don't repeat and a definite DEAD INSIDE influence on the first section. Also, I got to use my treasured Small Stone phaser on this one which was cool. As a general rule of thumb, effects pedals suck, but every once in a while...

Zac - On behalf of the whole band: Big thanks to Aston at Boss Tuneage who believes in us 100%, everyone who has booked us gigs, loaned us gear at gigs, been at the shows, recorded with us on the cheap, and generally are into what we have managed to put together... and if you wanna book us, get in touch at - Big Up!

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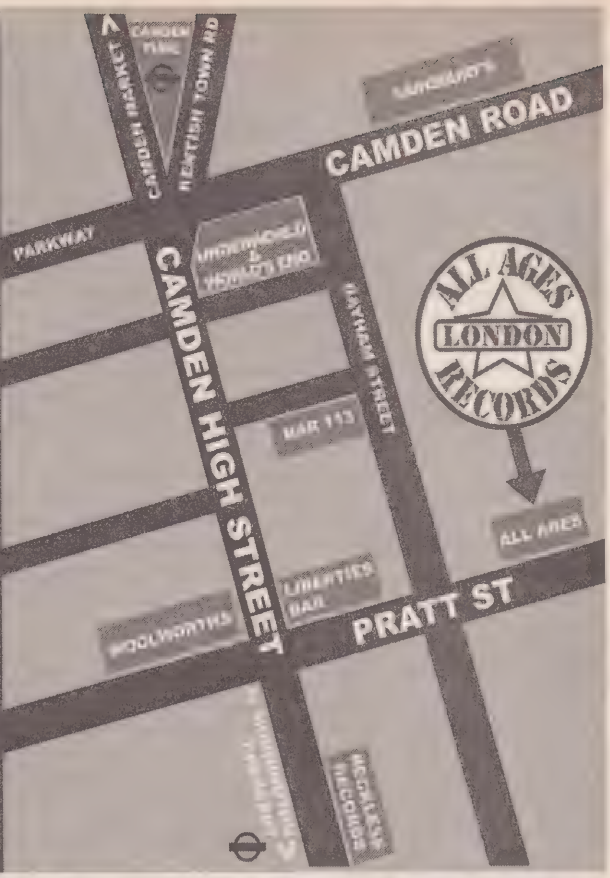
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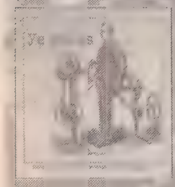

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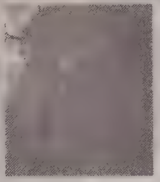

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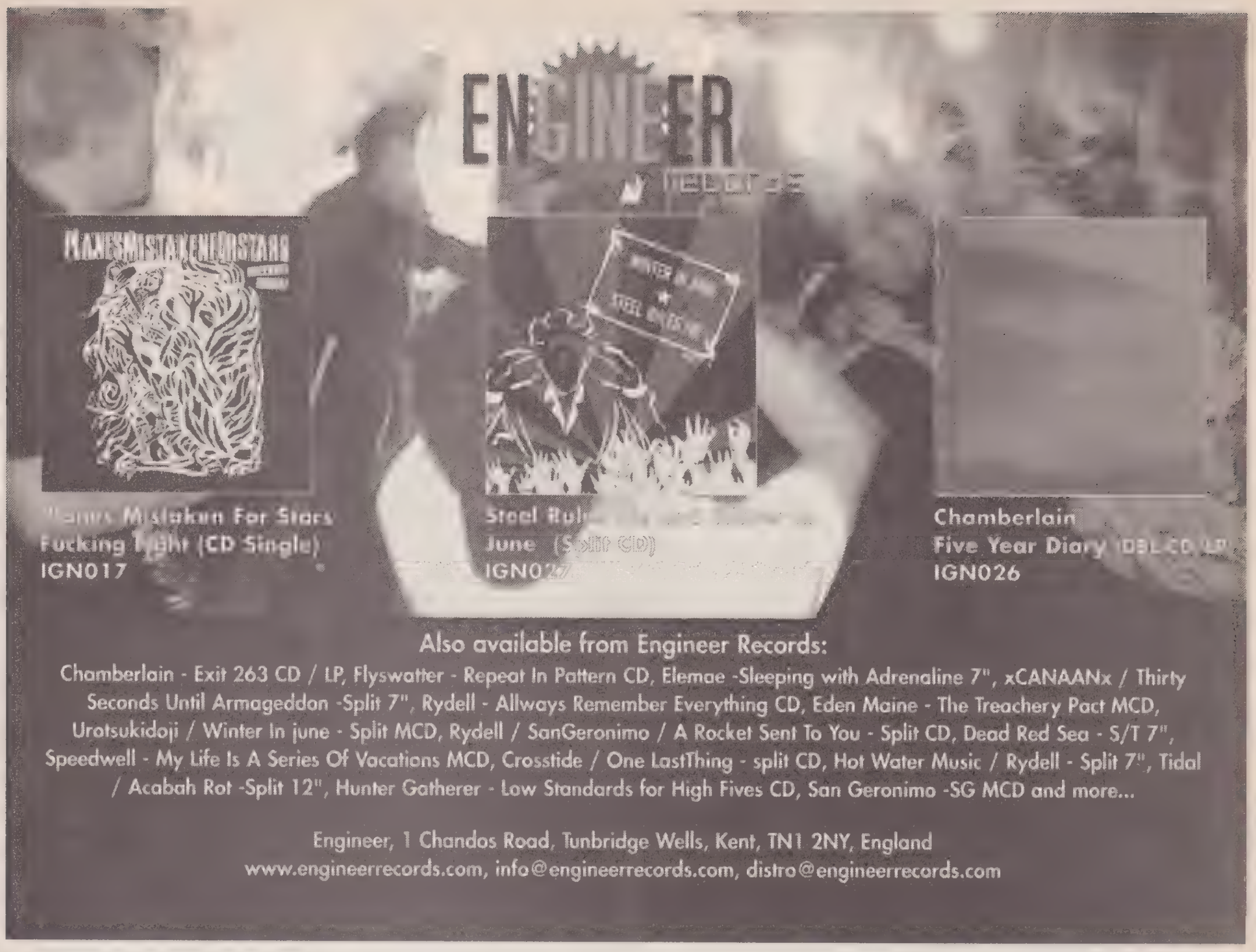

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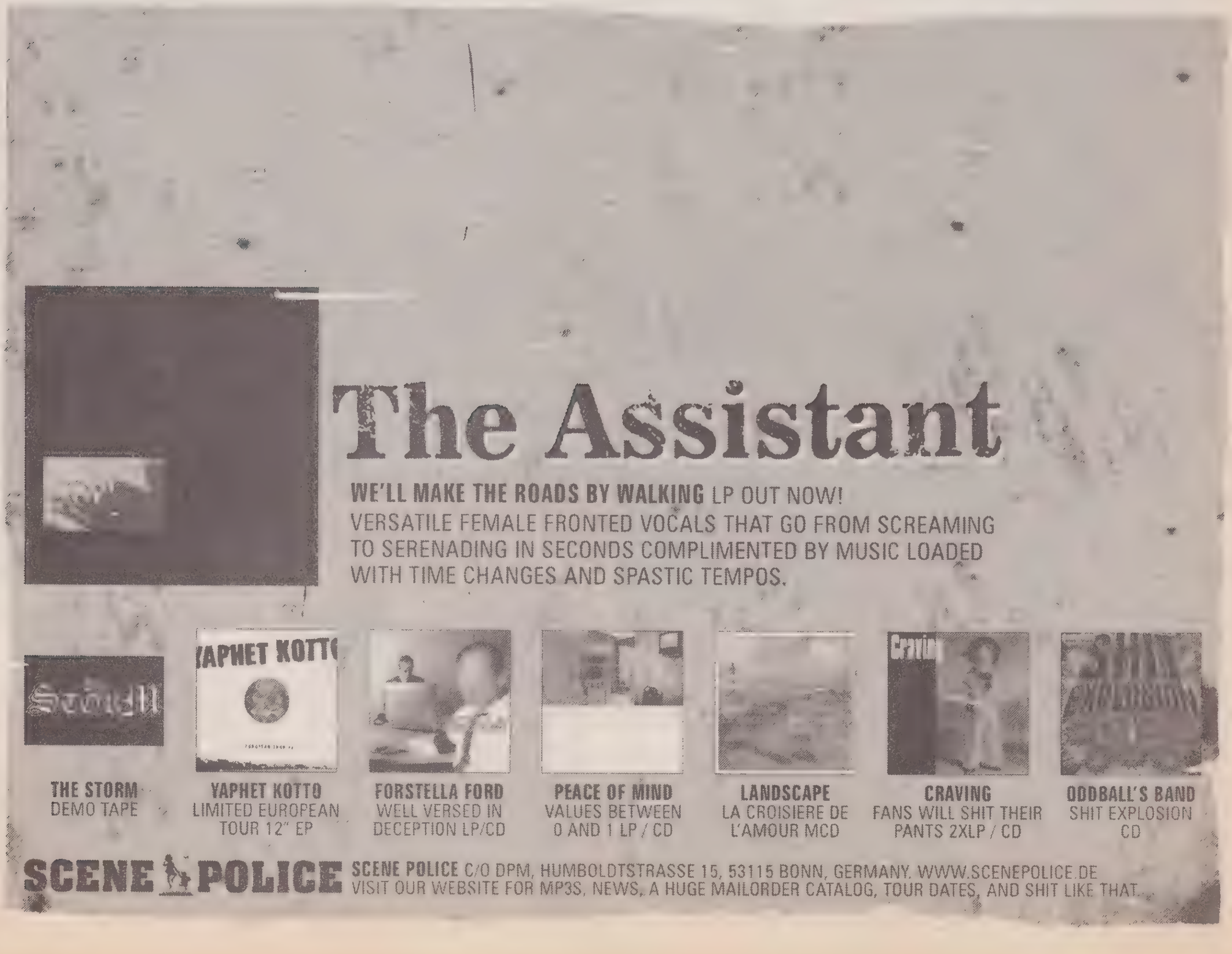

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MANIFESTO JUKEBOX

This interview took place with Jani, Jukka, Ville and Antti of MANIFESTO JUKEBOX on Friday 29th August prior to their gig with WASTED and I EXCUSE at Liverpool's Slaughter House. Interview by Andy J. Higgins. Photograph by Alison.

Fracture - *Give us a bit of background about when the band started and releases to date*

Jani - We started in early 1999. There was 3 of us then, me (Jani), Antti and Jukka.

Fracture - *So whereabouts in Finland are you from?*

Jani - All over, but now we all live in Tampere. But back then we used live like 100's of miles apart, and we met at gigs and talked about music and ideas, and it just started as a project. We were in different bands back then (none of which you would have heard of). 3 of us started playing and it felt good, so it became more than just a project really soon, and we started playing gigs, and releasing records and touring really naturally.

Fracture - *Let's chat about the name of the band*

Jani - I came up with the idea when I had plenty of time to think, when I was back working at the paper factory. I had the idea for the name actually before we started the band. Like I wanted a name that would sum up the ideas, and give us some form of reference and be open to interpretation. And it can be understood all over the world

Fracture - *So it's like "Manifesto Jukebox = a platform for ideas" ?*

Jani - That's one of the ideas, and it's also the social message of entertainment and pop culture, combining the two.

Fracture - *So your two main releases to date are the albums "Remedy" and "Desire"?*

Jani - Yes, hat's right. Our first release was a seven inch that we recorded when we'd been together for like 2 months, and we recorded it and released it ourselves, and we have done quite a few pressings of it so far, and actually now for this tour Boss Tuneage re-issued on CD, so the songs are now available on CD for the first time. It's not quite the type of stuff we play these days, but we are still happy with it.

Fracture - *How many copies have you shifted of the albums?*

Jani - Like 5,000 of Desire and I don't know of how many with "Remedy" because we are not involved with the distribution as that is all done via BYO, but as for Desire we first released it ourselves and since then it has been re-released and re-issued on our friends labels all over the world. Combat Rock in Finland, Does Everyone Stare? over in Canada. It's nice to have it distributed worldwide.

Antti - Mostly picked up by labels who like the music and the ideas. It's the perfect way to do it really.

Fracture - *Which is your favourite of the two releases?*

Antti - There are good points about the both of them. I think the song writing is much better in the latest (Remedy), but I [illegible] Desire is [illegible] more [illegible] in a kind of way. [illegible] songs are fairly rough and were not so well [illegible], so there is a lot of input in the way that they are [illegible].

Jukka - I prefer Remedy as well, but I am not too [illegible] about the overall mix / production.

Jani - Yes that's easy to say afterwards (if [illegible]), but it's in the [illegible] that we are [illegible] in the future.

Jukka - Yes it would not make any sense to make a perfect record.

Antti - Yes let's leave something for the 3rd album!

Fracture - *The first album [illegible] very much like the [illegible] "[illegible]" by LEATHERFACE - are you agree and what are the other bands that have inspired you?*

Antti - Maybe it's just HUSKER DU and LEATHERFACE probably at the time of "Desire", whereas maybe now going more towards the RITES OF SPRING, trying some different things in the music.

Jani - But I think it is fair to say that HUSKER DU was the main influence when we started.

Jukka - Yeah I agree, it's not like we wanted to copy their sound or anything, but they were real influential. We listen to a wide variety of music from Soul to Noise Terror, and everything in between.

Fracture - *Interested that you all met one another at gigs… at what gigs did you all meet… HUSKER DU type gigs?*

Jani - These bands didn't really play in Finland, I think HUSKER DU played there once back in 1987. Mainly like DIY, hardcore punk Finnish bands… that's where our roots are.

Fracture - *With yourselves, WASTED and PHOENIX FOUNDATION there is a bit of a Finnish thing going on… is this new or has it always been there and it's just that we are noticing it now?*

Jani - It's always been there, but now these bands that all have a common element and interest being taken in them all over the world… we are all really happy to see that happen, but we have always had a good tradition of hardcore punk bands.

Fracture - *Such as...*

Antti - Starting from the early eighties through the dark ages of the late 80's early 90's (yes when metal sort of came along and ruined it). These days people are getting a wider idea of what punk rock in Finland is all about. They would normally refer the noisy stuff and bands such as (KAAOS, RIISTETYT, TERVEET KADET) but now there is a huge variety of bands with different kind of sounds, and all the people usually get along well with each other, and do gigs together.

Jani - *And there are really many great bands like ENDSTAND, ON A SOLID ROCK, HERO DISHONEST, UNKIND.*

Fracture - RED CABARET?

Jani - Yeah totally. They're like from a little village up North in Finland. A really tiny place. Very cool (weather wise - and dark a lot of the time during certain months in the year).

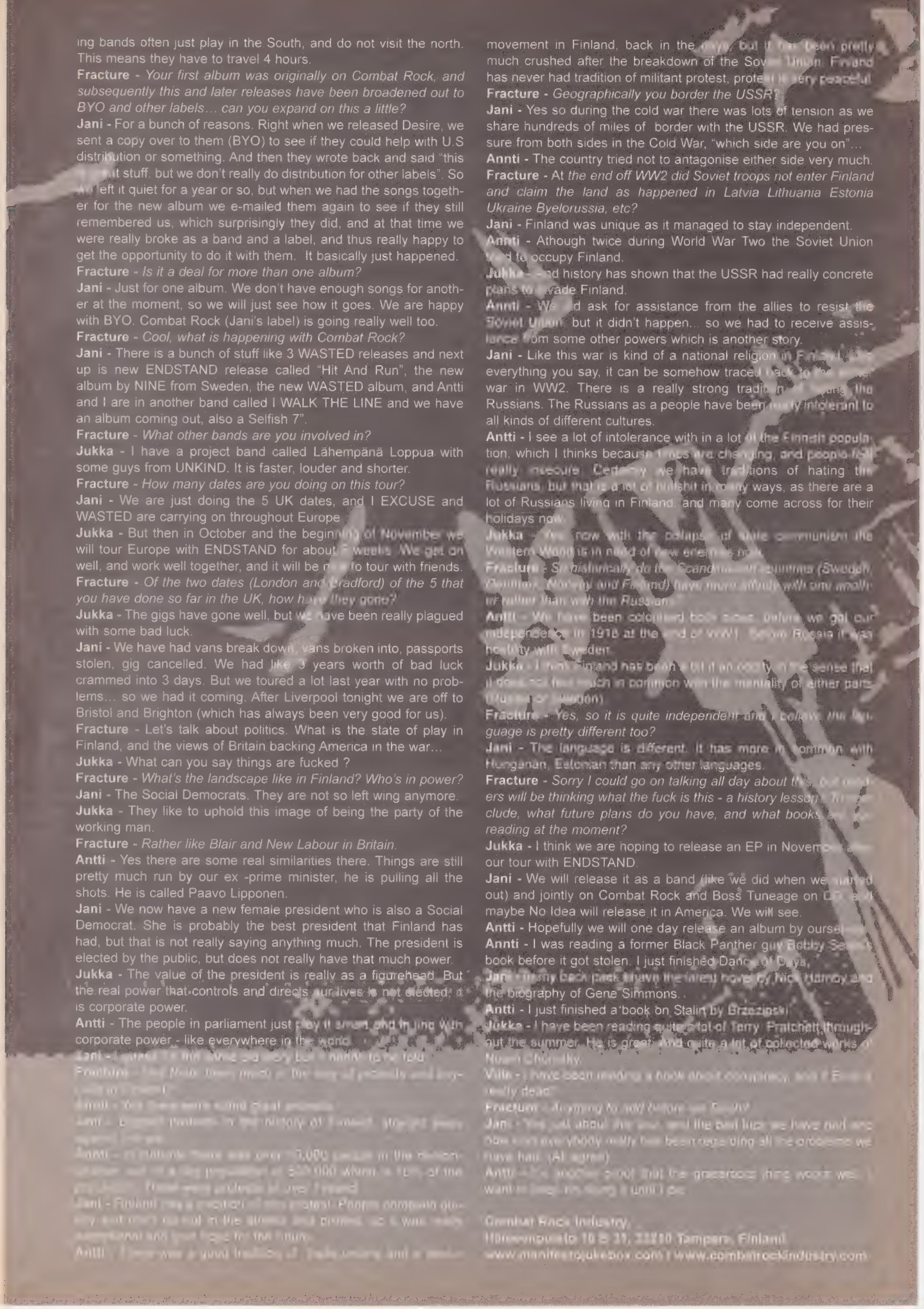
Fracture - *With the size, distance and climate how many main centres are there in Finland for staging gigs?*

Jani - 3 or 4, but not many. Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä.

Jukka - The concert side is mainly centred in the big cities.

Antti - But we have noticed it is getting better. For instance in Lapland there is a group of people who have started up their own touring circuit . Bands playing in the north of Sweden and the north of Finland.

Jukka - People often end up getting a bit pissed of, because visit-



ing bands often just play in the South, and do not visit the north. This means they have to travel 4 hours.

Fracture - *Your first album was originally on Combat Rock, and subsequently this and later releases have been broadened out to BYO and other labels… can you expand on this a little?*

Jani - For a bunch of reasons. Right when we released Desire, we sent a copy over to them (BYO) to see if they could help with U.S distribution or something. And then they wrote back and said "this is great stuff, but we don't really do distribution for other labels". So we left it quiet for a year or so, but when we had the songs together for the new album we e-mailed them again to see if they still remembered us, which surprisingly they did, and at that time we were really broke as a band and a label, and thus really happy to get the opportunity to do it with them. It basically just happened.

Fracture - *Is it a deal for more than one album?*

Jani - Just for one album. We don't have enough songs for another at the moment, so we will just see how it goes. We are happy with BYO. Combat Rock (Jani's label) is going really well too.

Fracture - *Cool, what is happening with Combat Rock?*

Jani - There is a bunch of stuff like 3 WASTED releases and next up is new ENDSTAND release called "Hit And Run", the new album by NINE from Sweden, the new WASTED album, and Antti and I are in another band called I WALK THE LINE and we have an album coming out, also a Selfish 7".

Fracture - *What other bands are you involved in?*

Jukka - I have a project band called Lähempänä Loppua with some guys from UNKIND. It is faster, louder and shorter.

Fracture - *How many dates are you doing on this tour?*

Jani - We are just doing the 5 UK dates, and I EXCUSE and WASTED are carrying on throughout Europe.

Jukka - But then in October and the beginning of November we will tour Europe with ENDSTAND for about 5 weeks. We get on well, and work well together, and it will be nice to tour with friends.

Fracture - *Of the two dates (London and Bradford) of the 5 that you have done so far in the UK, how have they gone?*

Jukka - The gigs have gone well, but we have been really plagued with some bad luck.

Jani - We have had vans break down, vans broken into, passports stolen, gig cancelled. We had like 3 years worth of bad luck crammed into 3 days. But we toured a lot last year with no problems… so we had it coming. After Liverpool tonight we are off to Bristol and Brighton (which has always been very good for us).

Fracture - Let's talk about politics. What is the state of play in Finland, and the views of Britain backing America in the war…

Jukka - What can you say things are fucked ?

Fracture - *What's the landscape like in Finland? Who's in power?*

Jani - The Social Democrats. They are not so left wing anymore.

Jukka - They like to uphold this image of being the party of the working man.

Fracture - *Rather like Blair and New Labour in Britain.*

Antti - Yes there are some real similarities there. Things are still pretty much run by our ex -prime minister, he is pulling all the shots. He is called Paavo Lipponen.

Jani - We now have a new female president who is also a Social Democrat. She is probably the best president that Finland has had, but that is not really saying anything much. The president is elected by the public, but does not really have that much power.

Jukka - The value of the president is really as a figurehead. But the real power that controls and directs our lives is not elected: it is corporate power.

Antti - The people in parliament just play it smart and in line with corporate power - like everywhere in the world.

Jani - I guess it is the same old story but it needs to be told.

Fracture - *Has there been much in the way of protests and boycotts in Finland?*

Antti - Yes there were some great protests.

Jani - Biggest protests in the history of Finland, straight away against the war.

Antti - In Helsinki there was over 10,000 people in the demonstration, out of a city population of 500,000 which is 10% of the population. There were protests all over Finland.

Jani - Finland has a tradition of very quiet protest. People complain quietly and don't go out in the streets and protest, so it was really exceptional and gave hope for the future.

Antti - There was a good tradition of trade unions and a socialist movement in Finland, back in the days, but it has been pretty much crushed after the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Finland has never had tradition of militant protest, protest is very peaceful.

Fracture - *Geographically you border the USSR?*

Jani - Yes so during the cold war there was lots of tension as we share hundreds of miles of border with the USSR. We had pressure from both sides in the Cold War, "which side are you on"…

Annti - The country tried not to antagonise either side very much.

Fracture - At *the end off WW2 did Soviet troops not enter Finland and claim the land as happened in Latvia Lithuania Estonia Ukraine Byelorussia, etc?*

Jani - Finland was unique as it managed to stay independent.

Annti - Athough twice during World War Two the Soviet Union tried to occupy Finland.

Jukka - And history has shown that the USSR had really concrete plans to invade Finland.

Annti - We did ask for assistance from the allies to resist the Soviet Union, but it didn't happen… so we had to receive assistance from some other powers which is another story.

Jani - Like this war is kind of a national religion in Finland, like everything you say, it can be somehow traced back to the winter war in WW2. There is a really strong tradition of hating the Russians. The Russians as a people have been really intolerant to all kinds of different cultures.

Antti - I see a lot of intolerance with in a lot of the Finnish population, which I thinks because times are changing, and people feel really insecure. Certainly we have traditions of hating the Russians, but that is a lot of bullshit in many ways, as there are a lot of Russians living in Finland, and many come across for their holidays now.

Jukka - Yes now with the collapse of state communism the Western World is in need of new enemies now.

Fracture - *[illegible] do the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland) have more affinity with one another rather than with the Russians?*

Antti - We have been colonised both sides, before we got our independence in 1918 at the end of WW1. Before Russia it was [illegible] with Sweden.

Jukka - I think Finland has been a bit of an oddity in the sense that it does not feel much in common with the mentality of either part (Russia or Sweden).

Fracture - *Yes, so it is quite independent and I believe the language is pretty different too?*

Jani - The language is different. It has more in common with Hungarian, Estonian than any other languages.

Fracture - *Sorry I could go on talking all day about this, but readers will be thinking what the fuck is this - a history lesson. To conclude, what future plans do you have, and what books are you reading at the moment?*

Jukka - I think we are hoping to release an EP in November after our tour with ENDSTAND.

Jani - We will release it as a band (like we did when we started out) and jointly on Combat Rock and Boss Tuneage on LP, and maybe No Idea will release it in America. We will see.

Antti - Hopefully we will one day release an album by ourselves.

Annti - I was reading a former Black Panther guy Bobby Seale's book before it got stolen. I just finished Dance of Days.

Jani - In my back pack I have the latest novel by Nick Hornby and the biography of Gene Simmons.

Antti - I just finished a book on Stalin by Brzezinski.

Jukka - I have been reading quite a lot of Terry Pratchett throughout the summer. He is great. And quite a lot of collected works of Noam Chomsky.

Ville - I have been reading a book about conspiracy, and if Elvis is really dead.

Fracture - *Anything to add before we finish?*

Jani - Yes just about the tour and the bad luck we have had and how kind everybody really has been regarding all the problems we have had. (All agree)

Antti - It's another proof that the grassroots thing works well. I want to keep on doing it until I die.

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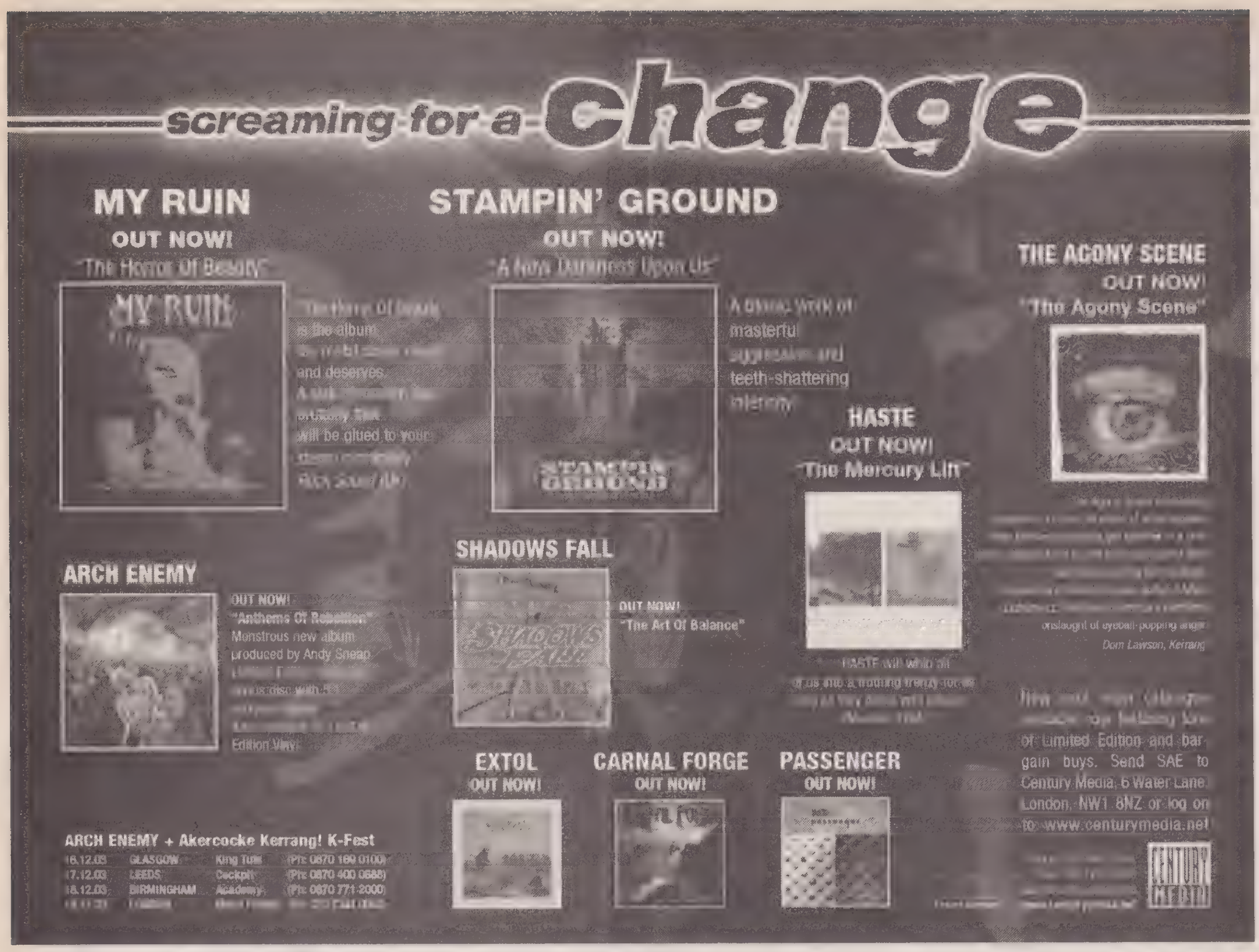

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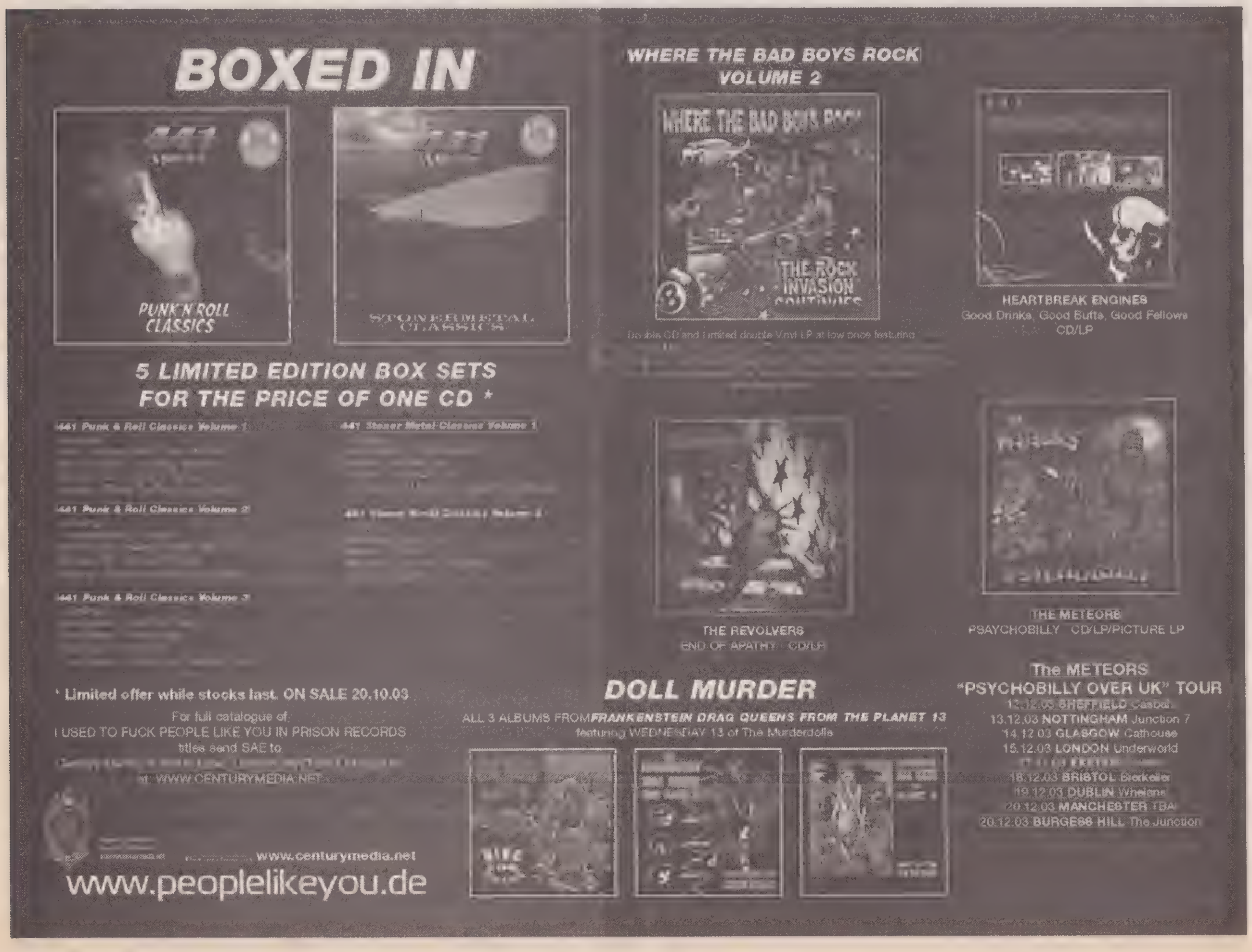

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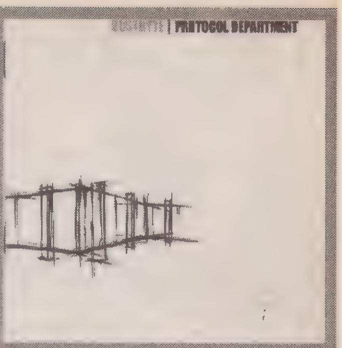

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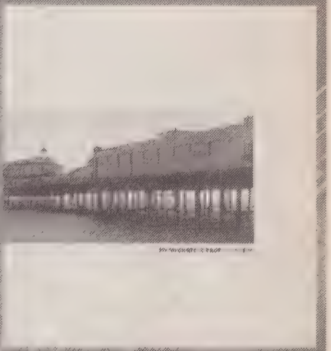

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The Letters Organize

Panic rock is the only way to describe this mess (from Atlanta, Georgia in the US)..something with urgency.something with a feeling of overwhelming rush. Stop, start, stop, start, stop, start...go go go. if you could describe the songs.that is how it would be. The Letters Organize have made a name for themselves in the United States. The "we don't want to play after those lunatics" curse constantly follows them!

Sometimes things like this need to happen, music like this has to take shape. Everyone needs to experience something that makes them feel uneasy, something that isn't safe. Drawing from influences as opposite as Led Zeppelin and Refused, This band hopes to do just that, be what rock music is suppose to be. something abrasive, something dangerous!!

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7 tracks of good, rocking post hardcore type stuff. I'm liking it straight away. Us folks in blighty are pretty spoiled by the bands of all punk rock genres these days, and here's another to add to the list. - Suspect Device

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The Devils reach out and slaughter ya - Mass Movement

Jesus Fuckin Christ, if it's loud scary and brutal you want then look no further - Playdead

The Devils deliver a metal assault topped by scream core vocals and razor sharp riffs. - Caught In The Crossfire

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THE WEAKERTHANS

INTERVIEW BY ANDY HIGGINS

THE WEAKERTHANS hail from Winnipeg, Canada, and are a bunch of tremendously delicate song writing souls taking elements from sources as diverse as HUSKER DU, WIRE, REM and WILCO. This was a hasty pre and post gig Interview with WEAKERTHANS' singer-songwriter John K. Sampson on Thursday 18th July in a coffee shop next to the Garage, Highbury, London and bits from a short time spent with the band back at the hotel after the gig. I had a million more questions I would have liked to explore but tempus fugit, so I tried to cover as many bases as possible in the time available.

Fracture - *When did you guys start out?*
John - End of '96 early '97. We had all played in different bands and just came together somehow. I had some songs that I wanted to record, so it began mainly as a recording project and then developed into something a little bigger than that.
Fracture - *You were in PROPAGANDHI.*
John - Yes I played on “Less Talk, More Rock“ and “How to Clean Everything“, the first two Propagandhi albums. I left after “Less Talk, More Rock“ came out.
Fracture - *And The other band members John, Steven and Jason… Are you all from Winnipeg?*
John - Yeah, well John Sutton our bass player is from Regina, a city about 5 hours down the road, but we all pretty much learned how to play music in and around the Winnipeg punk scene.
Fracture - *What bands were the guys in?*
John - In RED FISHER, PAINTED THIN, SANDPIPE FEVER… bands that toured but didn't get over here.
Fracture - *The Winnipeg thing is pretty prominent in your lyrics and music. You quote Catherine Hunter and Tom Wayman on your CD booklets / album sleeves.*
John - Catherine Hunter is a writer/poet from Winnipeg and she writes in the voice that I want to write in and a voice that I kind of understand. She is from the place I am from, and has been in a big influence on me. Writing in general has been a big influence on me, not necessarily just Canadian writing, but I kind of like writing that comes geographically from the margins, smaller places, and places far from the centre of power. Because I think there is a lot of potential in those places and in some of the work that comes from there. So that always been a pet interest of mine.
Fracture - *So Catherine Hunter is a lecturer and creative writer at the University of Winnipeg, is she an acquaintance of yours?*
John - Yes she is, well I would call her a friend. I took her creative writing class a couple of years ago. We took 9 months off about two years ago and I decided to go back to school as I had never really been to university. So I took a few courses of which this was one of them, and it was real exciting for me. I had a really good time, I had had trouble working in an academic environment but I still had a really great time in that class.
Fracture - *Has it been the same line up from the start (on all three albums including “The Watermark” EP)?*
John - Yes, well actually Steven (our guitarist) didn't play on the first album, he hadn't joined the band yet, but he actually joined shortly after it came out and added greatly to the songs. So when we licensed the record to Europe we put his name in there as he was a member of the band. So since then we have had exactly the same line up the whole time.
Fracture - *So in terms of licensing to Europe, you are now on Burning Heart (part of Epitaph) and were previously on Sub City... what is the status here and how does it all work?*
John - Epitaph in the US and Burning Heart in Europe. Prior to that we were on 5 or 6 different labels around the world. We had 2 European labels an Australian label, an American label and a Canadian label, and it was hard to keep track of things and of what everybody was doing. Burning Heart actually approached us as we were recording the record (we actually paid for the recording ourselves) and we actually didn't sign a contract until the recording was finished. Then we decided we would look around when the recording was finished, and we believe that Epitaph / Burning Heart are genuinely good people, I think they are an interesting business and interesting independent label. So we thought we would give it a try. We worked mainly through Burning Heart, going to and from with Epitaph. We then went down to LA to meet the Epitaph people which was really nice, and they showed us around, and so far it has been a good experience.
Fracture - *Are you signed for a number of releases?*
John - They have an option on the next album I believe, and we eventually end up owning the masters again. But they are com-

fortable in the knowledge that this could take 3 to 5 years, like we have always taken about 3 years on each record and a lot of labels aren't happy with that. They gotta keep churning out the product.

Fracture - *Winnipeg, a city of 680,000 people, central Canada, what kind of scene does it have ?*

John - It's quite vibrant, but it is a very isolated place, so isolated in fact that it is difficult to describe to Europeans and Americans. The closest city of any note is Minneapolis (home of HUSKER DU, THE REPLACEMENTS and many great bands) and that is about a 10 hour drive. Over the border from Manitoba is North Dakota, then South Dakota then Minnesota (Minneapolis is the state capital of Minnesota). I get the sense that in Europe and in the United States there is a sense of a lot more cultural sharing, like I mean there are isolated cities in those places, but nowhere near as isolated as in Canada. So I think in that sense it has to create its own culture, which has its benefits and hindrances like I think there are some bad things about an isolated music scene, but I think there are some great things also. I think the impulse can be a lot "nicer" that it is in a big city because there is so little fame involved. People make music to entertain themselves and entertain their friends, and speak about the place they are from, and speak about what concerns them, it generally doesn't go greatly beyond that. It fosters a real kind of creative community and I think a lot of great things have come out of the place. Winnipeg is also a place that is incredibly cold in the winter, it is intellectually and physically isolated. At -30 degrees you spend a lot of time indoors, and invite friends to come over and sit around in the basement next to a heater playing songs and stuff. I think a lot of really great things do come from Winnipeg, but I am still not really sure why.. (nb. we then established that with the break up of the Soviet Union that Canada is now the largest country in the world - an interesting point I thought you would all enjoy)

Fracture - *What about the music scene in Canada?*

John - DOA are great, I think NOMEANSNO are probably the greatest punk band to come from Canada, and I don't think they have gained the respect that they deserve in North America, I think they are much more known over here than they are in America. Those are certainly bands that I looked up to, but they are also a 24 hour drive away from me (Winnipeg to Vancouver), in a lot of ways I look to Minneapolis more than I look to Vancouver when was growing up. I was obsessed by HUSKER DU, THE REPLACEMENTS and SOUL ASYLUM and bands like that. I think there is a real mid-Western aesthetic that I relate to. Politically I am not a nationalist, I really love going to the mid-west of the United States and I feel a real closeness to the way they speak, the way they communicate and the way they make art and stuff. It's kind of odd. There are a lot of great Canadian bands, but it is really hard for them to tour first off, the drives are remarkably long and the bands just never get out of their home towns.

Fracture - *I notice from the wesbsite (www.weakerthans.org) that there are quite a few Canadian bands which are recommended, is this your personal choice ?*

John - Yes, Lewk is from Minneapolis actually and he does our website because he wants to and does it for free which is nice. The links are either friends of ours or just people that we admire. THE CONSTANTINES (for instance) we are going to go on tour with them in September in North America. I think they are a fantastic band. They have just signed to Sub Pop in the States. (We then segway to a review of another band THRICE, reviewed in this week's NME, who used to be on Sub City). I noticed that, now they are on Mercury, how does this happen? We played with THRICE once. I think they are from Orange County. Sub City seem to do some really good things which is what I like about them.

Fracture - *In terms of publicity / interviews I notice that you are making time to do some other interviews with UK fanzines. Do you make a point of picking underground publications to speak to?*

John - Yes that is always our first choice. The community we come from is the 'zine community, and that's where we usually find the people whom we can relate to, so we really want to talk to them first. But we also want to talk to other publications, and it is really interesting how the conversations can be really bizarre or really great. We don't want to "ghettoize" ourselves in one community.

Fracture - *Are you familiar with many UK and US fanzines?*

John - Not too many UK fanzines. In the States we are familiar with Punk Planet and MRR, and Exclaim is a good Canadian fanzine, it's out monthly. There are many more we run into. They all have something in common that we can relate to.

Fracture - *Explain the American / Canadian thing. For instance the two daft cartoon characters on TV's South Park are Canadians, and I detect a tendency of US shows to poke fun at Canada and Canadians... is it anything similar to the British / German thing whereby Germans are portrayed as not having a sense of humour?*

John - Yeah I understand, but I mean like funny people in Hollywood are Canadians Mike Myers, Martin Short, Jim Carey, the list goes on and on. So it's not a sense of humour thing. I think it's jealousy (laughter), because most Americans I know would secretly love to live in Canada, because for one thing there is Medicare (socialised medicine), they are legalising marijuana, there are same sex marriage, and far less gun crime even though per capita there are the same number of guns as just across the border. And I think it's just a nice foil, like no one is going to get really mad if you make fun of Canadians, and people have to make fun of someone... so I give them that. Normally everyone just takes it in their stride, but occasionally I have become frustrated by it, I mean in the United States there is a profound strain of intellectualised anti-intellectualism - being wilfully stupid and proud to be. It is funny for a while, but then you feel like you just wanna go "yeah, I know you have been to University, there is no reason for you to actually think this way"... so I do feel more at home in Canada than I do in the United States, but I am sometimes loathed to say so because so many Canadians just despise America. Whereas I am quite fascinated by it, and I think some of the greatest opponents to America are Americans, so there are some incredible people there. We live in a world where nothing else really matters you know, America makes all the decisions, it is therefore a place you cannot just dismiss, but you have to try and understand it, and well... destroy it frankly (more laughs).

Fracture - *So who are these great Americans you mention, the Noam Chomsky's of this world?*

John - Yes... and a lot of writers and artists some of my favourite writers are American fiction writers such as Don Delillo, Rick Moody, Laurie Moore, David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Letham, and I can go on and on. I tend to split my reading between fiction and poetry, and I try not to categorise, as it all can be wonderful.

Fracture - *What you have been listening to and reading lately?*

John - Oh I guess the list is a little long. I have been listening to a lot of Winnipeg stuff, a band called THE PAPERBACKS, whom I really love, TH CONSTANTINES, I am always listening to people like John Prine, Tom Waits, Randy Newman and other great American singer songwriters.

Fracture - *What are the other guys in the band into?*

John - Well Jason listens to a lot of jazz and experimental music, John Sutton is a connoisseur of 70's soft rock, he loves BREAD, AMERICA, THE EAGLES and also I mean he has a very good taste in music as well, I know he's obsessed by this band called STOOL from the Southern US. Stephen is very much like an alt. Country guy, he likes a lot of that stuff. WILCO, we all like WILCO.

Fracture - *That's quite an interesting mix of musicians.*

John - Yeah I guess so. If we were all playing on our own it wouldn't sound anything like this but when we all kind of come together it results in something that sounds like us.

Fracture - *And on your website you call yourselves power pop.*

John - Yes, kind of a catch all term. We definitely come from punk rock. But from a strain of punk rock that really loves melody. Despite the fact that I have about a four note range, that's kind of like what we do in our pop songs.

Fracture - *What about European and other influences from this side of the pond?*

John - The usual suspects of THE CLASH, THE DAMNED, and Billy Bragg especially who's been a big influence for me. We actually got to open for Billy Bragg in Toronto a few years ago which was a big thrill for me, but I was too nervous to actually go up and meet him. He was there back stage, and I was kind of like I can go and meet him, but I will probably say something stupid, which I kind of regret now.

Fracture - *What about second wave bands like STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, and earlier ones like WIRE whom everyone from Biafra to Rollins cites as an influence?*

John - Oh yes for sure. WIRE, PINK FLAG, 154 and all that.

Fracture - *What about the third wave of UK punk / Oi like BLITZ and GBH, did they register on your Richter scale? A lot of the press turned their noses and ignored this phenomenon.*

John - They did a little bit. GBH are cool. I did my first PROPAGANDHI tour in Germany was with GBH and they were tremendous people, hilarious actually.

Fracture - What about the modern day Scandinavian bands like MILLENCOLIN, STARMARKET and MANIFESTO JUKEBOX?

John - I haven't really caught up with a lot of that stuff yet. It hasn't really crossed my radar yet. That's not to say that I wouldn't like them, but I don't listen to a lot of contemporary European music actually now I think about it.

Fracture - *Why is that? Is the European message not too strong over there? Is it all US, US, US?*

John - It always disappoints me when I go to Germany and see German bands singing and writing in English in order to aim across at America. That is now the centre of the worlds culture under capitalism at the moment, this is the way it has become. It is now probably time for a European renaissance of sorts in popular music, in fact it's probably a perfect time for it when the horrors of what America actually does to the world are so obvious. Purely concentrating on our local cultures. We have the same problem in Canada, American bands just always immediately have more cache than Canadian bands.

Fracture - *Who is the Prime Minister of Canada, and how does the political landscape lie?*

John - He is called Jean Cretien, he is what is referred to as a liberal but he is not liberal at all. The Conservative Party in Canada collapsed about 6 years ago, and the liberal party was kind of a centrist party but is now is simply the Conservative Party. So there is a Labour Party in Canada called the New Democratic Party and they have 15 - 20% of the popular vote. Cretian has been in power for about 10 years with a colossal percentage of the overall vote.

Fracture - *How are relations with the US in the current climate?*

John - Well slightly chilly these days, because Canada didn't join the war, but I mean they still have the money stick. You can only cross the United States politically for so long before they just say "lets turn off the money", because Canada relies, as most of the world does, far too heavily on America for its survival.

Fracture - *How do you personally keep yourself going under the deadweight of all this?*

John - Well I think about trying to access these ideas, these depressions through small things. I try to access what the world should be like through the street you live on, I tend to write small in order to think bug. I guess that's the only way I know how to do it. For instance I like to write about things like this... you and I sitting at a table speaking our minds, and how that relates to the broader world rather than the other way round. And that to me is the approach to view, and it is worthwhile doing. I mean I am not hopeless - I have hope, and sometimes you have to find that hope in the small things and the details of life.

Fracture - *Do you pen the lyrics, and how do you go about it?*

John - It's is different every time. Our approach is very collaborative, sometimes I will bring in a whole song or sometime I will bring in one chord, or someone will have come up with something musically... it's hard to say, there is no formula. And I always think once I have written a song how did I do that? Will I ever be able to do it again? I work pretty hard on things, and I get pretty obsessive on songs I am writing.

Fracture - *Do you make a living out of the band, and has it been so for a while now?*

John - Yes I do now, but that's only been over the last 2 years. And it is not a very good living. I live in a really cheap city, I don't think I could afford to do it anywhere else. All the band members do different things too, like play with other people, our bass player does sound engineering and Jason plays with other people around Toronto. John and Jason live in Toronto. So this means we only get together once every couple of months and spend a week or whatever... Sounds harder than what it is ?

Fracture - *What does the future hold for THE WEAKERTHANS?*

John - More of the same. It's kind of a pattern we have, put a record out, tour it to death, work on another one, put it out... I guess that's kind of where we are right now, just recovering from making this new record that came out at the end of August called "Reconstruction Site". We haven't really been writing since we finished that, so we'll start again soon.

Fracture - *What is your favourite of the three albums?*

John - The new one, because I had the most fun making it, and I don't know, I just like it!

Fracture - *Is "Time's Arrow" based on Martin Amis' work?*

John - Yes the song is kind of based on that book.

Fracture - *Are you going to carry on doing benefits and supporting arts projects and things like that?*

John - Yes, certainly. We kind of take them as they come. We are doing a benefit for artists against the war in Toronto at the end of August, and various other things like that this year.

Back at the hotel we enjoyed a few quick beers and shared a few stories about everything from model aeroplanes to the rigours of touring. I am sure some quite useful dialogue took place, well worthy of inclusion here, but to be honest I was tired, and a tad merry so my powers of recollection are fuzzy. The next morning at 7.00am I went for a walk and to pick up a newspaper. On returning I bumped into to THE WEAKERTHANS' drummer (John) loading out his gear. We exchanged a few words and he was absolutely bowled over with the gig the night before and the great reaction that the London crowd had given the band.

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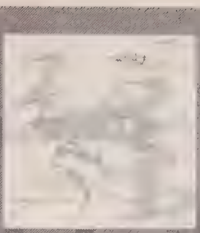

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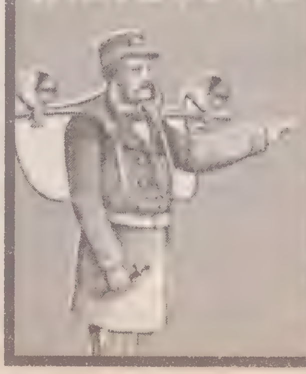

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AN INTERVIEW WITH BILL FROM DR. STRANGE RECORDS BY STEVE SCANNER.

Introduction #1 :
It must be coming up to ten years now that I have been involved in making fanzines. My first effort (Mad Monks #1 - #12) was a low key affair, very much geared towards the pop-punk of the day (we're talking the mid-nineties here) and although I got a lot less stuff sent for review, promo, etc. than we do for Fracture, there was a very small handful of labels and people that fully supported what I was doing at that time - Bill at Dr. Strange Records was one of them. Some of the first ever packages I received were from this legendary label, and in many ways it was trustworthy, generous people like this that really inspired me to continue on and on and on. The bands Dr Strange were putting out at the time were really the cream of the crop of that whole era - the first FACE TO FACE 7" is a total classic. As is the first ZOINKS! album... this is the label that bands like GAMEFACE, GUTTERMOUTH and VOODOO GLOW SKULL grew up on... look at all those bands now - all "successful" in their own right. So we're now ten years down the line, Fracture is about to end, but of course we already have a new fanzine in our minds. If it wasn't for labels like Dr. Strange who showed their support from day one, you might not even be reading this now. I personally want to thank Bill for being such an inspiring guy over the years, always keen to help (you should see the mess that is Mad Monks #6, The Dr. Strange Special!) and always keeping it DIY and punk rock - the only way...

Introduction #2 :
So Jo and I are in California for a month. We're staying with a guy that soon becomes a life-long friend, Rob Coe. We spend much of the trip in Los Angeles, staying at his house. Everyday he wants us to have the best time we can. I tell him about Dr. Strange Records, it's in a town 40 miles East of Los Angeles, called Alta Loma. Rob is into driving us there, so he goes into work early on a Saturday morning to run off a Yahoo directions map. He comes back, we load up with bagels and coffee, and off we go... through Glendale, up to the freeway that takes you past Pasadena, and on to Las Vegas, if you keep driving long enough that is... 40 miles, not far, we'll be there in an hour easy... we're reading the map... 2 hours down and I start to think something's up. We pull into a gas station, we've over-shot Alta Loma by about 40 miles!!! Idiots, we think, plus it's about 100 fucking degrees out in that desert... we start to drive back, try again... an hour and a half, no roads lead to Alta Loma... we see the L.A. skyline. What the fuck? We did it again, arghhh!!! We go back to Silverlake with tails between our legs, amazed at our unbelievably bad map reading skills... The Saturday after comes, we try again. Rob plays it safe, calls the shop a few times to get precise directions - we get close, no signs for Alta Loma, just Rancho Cucamonga. We figure that must be it... we're heading down the main street, we're almost there... we overshoot the turning by about 25 blocks - what the fuck is wrong with us!!! But finally, we get there - it only took a week! The Dr Strange store itself is amazing, but it's in the middle of nowhere. As far as we can tell, Alta Loma is just an area consisting of a few blocks within Rancho Cucamonga, so if you're ever in California and you want to visit there (it's worth it, not just for the shop but for the scenery as well!) make sure you get directions for Cucamonga and not Alta Loma... Intro's by Monk Dave.

Fracture - *OK Doc, first off, can you just tell us a bit about your background? Was your childhood spent in a particularly musical environment? What was the reaction of your parents when you discovered Punk Rock?*

Doc - I think I'm pretty normal when it comes to my childhood. Born and raised in sunny Southern California. One sister, a mom and a dad. My dad wasn't around too much (that's another story in itself!) but I had lots of love and encouragement throughout my life. When I first got into Punk, or actually just music, I was about 15. That was 1980. Bands like ADAM AND THE ANTS, BLONDIE, DEVO, THE DICKIES, PAT BENATAR, XTC and soon afterwards more aggressive stuff like BLACK FLAG, CIRCLE JERKS, THE CHEIFS, ADOLESCENTS, etc... I was first introduced to Punk by my buddy Glen. He had an older brother who was into it. I went to my first gig with Glen. It was THE DICKIES. Still my favourite band. It was insane! We were just kids alone at The Whiskey in Hollywood. I remember first walking in there and having a cocktail waitress ask if I wanted a drink. It was a whole new world. My parents, or I should say my mom, was pretty cool about my music. Her only concern was when she saw a 999 LP of mine. She said, *"Well as long as it's not 666 I guess it's alright"*. She was, and IS so oblivious! Still has no idea what type of music I listen to!

Fracture - *How did you get into the whole Punk Rock thing? Was there a defining moment when you realised that the world of Punk was the one for you?*

Doc - Like I said above, I honestly wasn't even into music before I listened to New Wave / Punk Rock. Of course as a kid I listened to what was on the radio - Jackson Five, Osmonds, Three Dog Night, all the 'hits' but never really found a connection until Punk Rock. It was, and is, so much more than music. It truly is a way of life. It's a way of thinking and a way of living. Ask ten people what Punk means to them and you'll get ten different answers. That's one thing I like about it. At first there was a feeling that something was 'wrong' with it. By that I mean you kind of had to keep it undercover to a degree. Back then Punk was NOT acceptable in the least. Most people thought you were out to destroy the government. But only after you killed your parents and fucked your dog! Times have changed a whole lot…

Fracture - *How long ago was it that you started the distro? Were you involved in Punk in anyway prior to that? Were you ever in a band or writing a 'zine? What made you choose a distro over those other options? What was the reaction toward you as a new distro back then - were you treated with caution, or open arms?*

Doc - Actually this month (October 2003) marks the 15th year of the Dr. Strange Records mail order and 14 for the label. I started the mail order catalogue, specializing in rare and out of print Punk Rock, just for the fun of it. I was buying and trading records with people from the UK and had noticed that these same records I could get for say, $5.00, in stores in Hollywood were selling for three times or more that amount. I figured why not give it a try. My first catalogue was one page long and had LP's and 7"s on it. I had a stack of fliers in my car and any time I saw a Punk or a car with Punk stickers on it I'd put a flier on it. I also placed a couple ads in MRR and Flipside. It was the greatest feeling in the world to get my first order in the mail. Actually it's still a great feeling even today. My only prior involvement in Punk was just going to gigs with my friends. I never did a 'zine, never played in a band. Hell we were too busy ditching school and drinking! I'd say that all my friends and all those that bought records from me were very cool and encouraging. I think the Punk scene then was more close nit that it is today. We all had a common 'enemy' - Society!

Fracture - *What made you start the record label? Was it with the idea of a specific release, maybe only a single release? What hopes and aspirations did you have for the label originally, and how have they changed as the label has progressed?*

Doc - I started the record label a year after the mail order just because one day I was making a list of goals in life. You know, things to do before I died. I originally only planned on doing one release. A band that went to my high school in the early 80's called MANSON YOUTH. I met the singer when he moved in to my apartment complex (he didn't go to my school, the others did). So I said, *"Okay, let's go for it."* It took such a long time to do. The first time you do anything usually sucks and this was no exception. But once I had that record in my hands it made all the headaches worth it. A true accomplishment! I then told my distributor who I was buying records from for the mailorder - Mordam Records - about it. They asked me if I wanted them to be my distributor and said, *"Sure, I guess."* I didn't know then what I know now. It's so difficult to get a good and honest distributor. Because of Mordam and their honesty, I decided to release another and then another and another. Now I'm working on my 102nd release! My hopes and aspirations for the label and mail order are pretty much the same now as back then. I just want to pay rent and buy pizza anytime I want it. Simple but true.

Fracture - *Did you have any knowledge of releasing records prior to that of your debut release? Did you have anyone on hand to help you through it, or did you seek advice off any other labels?*

Doc - No one was there to offer any advice to me in the beginning. It was a lot of bumping against walls, paying too much and learning the hard way. That is the main reason that I offer a list of 'Where to Get Things Done'. It'll walk anyone through doing it for their first time step by step. Where to get things pressed, mastered, labels made, anything and everything related to pressing records and CD's. If anyone needs that list feel free to contact me. Just ask for 'The List'.

Fracture - *What do you feel was the biggest obstacle originally?*

Doc - I guess the obvious one is money. I mean a lack of! I had and still have the drive and determination to get it done. I don't let things discourage me. If I want to do it, it WILL happen.

Fracture - *Do you find that, even after some 14 years of releasing records, you are still finding new things out about the whole process of releasing records and the music industry?*

Doc - Maybe to some degree. I think it's actually a reaffirmation. Especially on people in general and the way we think and act. I've been through a lot in 14 years of the label. I've met some great people and some REAL assholes. It's sad to see how many people are so easily corrupted by greed. Either greed for money, fame and popularity or who knows what else. It's sad when you see your one time friend throw it all away just to be 'famous' and rich. Just the opposite of what Punk Rock should be all about. At least to me. The biggest downfall to the label is knowing too much. Let's say I really like THE DICKIES for example. They release a new record on a label I have no respect for what-so-ever. It kind of ruins the fun of buying the new release. I love the band but don't want to support some real assholes that run the label.

Fracture - *What kind of qualities do you look for in a band which wishes to release something on Dr. Strange? Do you have any guidelines on what you will and will not release - be that their lyrics, attitude, personality, etc? Do you think there is a defined Dr. Strange sound?*

Doc - My 'requirements' for releasing something is still the same. If I like it, you're in. More and more though it is important to find a band that is willing to work. By that I mean tour and support a new release. Some do say that Dr. Strange has a certain sound to it. In my opinion that 'sound' is good solid Punk Rock. I've released bands from THE FREEZE to ZOINKS. There's a wide, wide range in there. The bands I'm releasing now are more true to my heart. Bands that I grew up with. I'm either doing reissues or new material from older greats such as THE SKULLS, MAD PARADE, THE FREEZE, THE CHEIFS, BROKEN BONES, FLUX OF PINK INDIANS and so forth.

Fracture - *I guess you don't want to go into specifics as it changes from band to band I assume - but what kind of deal do you offer bands? Do you deal in actual written contracts, or is it all based on a handshake and your/the band's word?*

Doc - That has changed a little over the years. After being screwed over a couple times by doing the 'handshake' deal I now have a very simple agreement that is in writing. It's less than a page long and simply says that I pay for all costs and once the release breaks even, we split is 50-50. It's simple and very fair. In the past, when releases sold well (they no longer do for anyone!) I would pay for the recording costs. But now that is the one thing I no longer pay for.

Fracture - *You've had some bands on the label that have moved on and done bigger (but not necessarily better) things - some of those we shall come to later. But, would you ever consider signing a band purely because you know they would make you/the label a stack of cash?*

Doc - Yeah you're right about that. A few have moved on to bigger and shittier things! Anyway, no I wouldn't sign a band in hopes of making a ton of money. I'll only release something if I truly like it. If, by chance, a band does make money then fine. But that's never the reason for signing a band. I've turned down several bands that would have made a lot of money because I just didn't like their music.

Fracture - *How many copies of each release do you press up? Does it vary depending on the band? Do you have a favoured format in dealing with - CD or vinyl?*

Doc - That totally depends on the band. Like I said above, things

don't sell like they did in the 'good old days'. About 10 years ago or so anything I did would sell 10,000 easily. Now I'm lucky to sell 1,000. I think it has to do with people burning CD's and having more 'toys' to play with - Playstation, DVD's, etc. My favourite format is still vinyl of course! And of course that is the one format that doesn't sell at all. I still press vinyl but only in limited pressings. Coloured vinyl, silk screened sleeves, autographed and so forth. That way it helps to sell some and it's fun as well. Here's an example; I have a new SKULLS / TEXAS THIEVES split 7" coming out this month. It'll be limited to 800 copies, hand numbered and comes on eight different coloured vinyl with eight different coloured sleeves. Take that collector nerds!

Fracture - *We touched on this earlier, but I have read that you have been lucky from the start with distribution as you go through Mordam. How did that deal arise and just why do you feel that distribution is so hard for labels to obtain? Do you do trades with other record labels?*

Doc - I have been lucky and I have no idea why. As I said, I was dealing with Mordam when I was buying records for my mail order. I didn't know until years later how lucky that was. With Mordam there are no rip-offs. They have been ripped off before by other distributors they sell to but they always pay the labels regardless. Very cool of them. I do trade with other labels when I can. It's a good way to hear other stuff and since it's just my releases it's no big deal and is cheap.

Fracture - *What has been the biggest selling release on the label? Is there one release over all others that you are particularly proud of? Conversely, are there any records you regret putting out, or bands you regret working with?*

Doc - The best selling release I've done is VOODOO GLOW SKULLS. Not only because they're a good band but also because they play ALL the time. They're on tour now. After 13 years they still tour the world. That makes all the difference in the world. I'm honestly proud of each and every release. It's kind of like being a father and these are your kids. How do you pick just one? If I had to though I'd say the most current release I'm working on are my favourites. Mostly because it's new to my ears. I don't regret any of the releases I've done. Even the ones that didn't sell. Of course I want them all to at least break even but even if they don't that doesn't mean it isn't a good release.

Fracture - *If we can just talk about a few of the bands you have worked with over the years, starting with FACE TO FACE. How did you see those guys change from your initial contact with them up to the stage when they left the label? Did they not say the reason for leaving Dr. Strange was, "Just business"? What do you think of their output post-Dr. Strange? Where would you place them in the mythical tree of Punk Rock credibility?*

Doc - I could write a book on them. Things started out great. They came to me, I liked them and all was fine. Until the greedy bug infected them! These were people I hung out with as friends. Went on vacation with. Went to dinner with. They are a prime example of the weakness of mankind. Yes, they did say *"Sorry Doc, it's just business."* As far as Punk Rock credibility goes, they have none. Not an ounce. They don't have a clue what Punk Rock really is. I honestly haven't even listened to anything they've done after my release with them - which is, no denying, a great release. They are dead to me and as I hear, dead to everyone else. It's been years since anyone has asked me at the store, *"Do you carry FACE TO FACE?"*

Fracture - *One of your most recent releases has been the awesome CHANNEL 3 album, 'CH3'. How did you hook up with those guys? Did you find them easy to work with? Were you not worried they might turn in another hair-metal album?*

Doc - Yeah, that was really great. Kimm had sent me a 5 song CD-R of their new stuff to me. It was funny because it had a letter explaining who they were, where they came from etc. I'm reading this thinking, you're kidding right? Who the hell doesn't know who CHANNEL 3 are! After hearing the demo I knew right away they were back on track with their Punk Rock roots. I think it's an amazing release. Most bands that get back together after so many years can't come close to their original 'greatness'. These guys haven't lost a thing on record OR live. The last time I saw them was a couple months ago with CHANNEL 3, THE SKULLS, SHATTERED FAITH and D.I. Needless to say it was a GREAT gig!

Fracture - *A band that has always seemed synonymous with the label - particularly in the early years of Dr. Strange - is GAMEFACE. What attracted to you to them all those years ago? Why did they feel the need to move on and were you happy for them to go? I understand Jeff Caudill still does artwork for you - how do you find working with him and what do you think of the recent GAMEFACE album, 'Four To Go' - it seems to be a bit of a return to the sound on 'Three To Get Ready'.*

Doc - GAMEFACE was one of the few bands I really tried to sign up. I just thought they were great. Why? Because they are I guess. Jeff is a good guy (just spoke with him yesterday actually). He doesn't do much work for me anymore. He has a very busy job at a production company making ads, DVD covers, posters, etc. for big movies. Like 'Planet of the Apes', 'Hannibal' and a ton of others. I'm really proud of him. GAMEFACE also now has Steve and Guy from another Dr. Strange band, THE TANK. Both great guys. I really like them. And of course I can't forget Todd (guitarist). ALL of them are very down to earth and cool people. I was very happy for them to move on. They did what they said they would in regard to Dr. Strange and I thought (as well as they) that Revelation would be a good move up. They handled things the right and decent way. In all honesty I haven't heard 'Four to Go' yet. Just been so busy. I heard that it was REALLY good though. GAMEFACE is one off the many bands that never got their fair shake at it. It happens. The odds of getting big are always against you but their heads are in the right place and that's why they're still out there more than 10 years later. *sidenote, GAMEFACE just broke up!

Fracture - *Another new signing is the SKULLS, who have just released their second Dr. Strange album, 'The Golden Age Of Piracy'. Why did this cult band of the early LA scene get back together and how did you hook up with them? Is singer Billy Bones a pretty wild guy to work with? And how did former ADICT*

and Ipswich resident James Harding end up in the line-up?

Doc - I can't say enough good things about THE SKULLS. Truly one of the best bands I've ever seen (and I've seen a LOT) and one of the best releases I've ever been a part of. As far as I know they were going to get back together to play 'The Class of '77' gig. All the greats were there CONTROLLERS, THE DOGS, AGENT ORANGE, RUNAWAYS, TSOL, CIRCLE JERKS, WEIRDOS, SCREAMERS and of course THE SKULLS. That was the first time I saw them. They were amazing! PURE ENERGY! A buddy of theirs, Jean-Luc at Headline Records, put out a 7" of their old stuff and a friend of a friend told them about me. They had some new songs and I loved them and after meeting them (nicest guys in the world) the rest is history. Billy Bones (singer) needs to write a book. He lived the earliest days of the LA Punk scene. Playing the Masque, sharing practice room with the GO-GO's, rooming with IGGY POP. Amazing life so far. James Hardslug (ADICTS keyboardist) hooked up with them and offered to play bass. Sean (Gears) was on drums and Kevin 'The Kid' on guitar. This line-up is by FAR the best thing out there and in all honesty the new SKULLS stuff blows away their old stuff. Same '77 LA style, just better. This is a band that should own the world. Actually they're coming to Europe THIS month and then are doing a West Coast tour with THE WEIRDOS! Trust your ole' Doc and see them.

Fracture - *Another band that I always thought typified the early Dr. Strange sound was ZOINKS! Do you feel that via the likes of them, GAMEFACE and RHYTHM COLLISION, the label developed a distinctly Pop-Punk persona? You still in touch with any of the former members?*

Doc - Yeah, ZOINKS were another great band and I guess that did typify the Dr. Strange sound at that time. I still talk to them as well every once in a while. Zac (singer) stopped by the store a month or so ago and I talk to Harlan (RHYTHM COLLISION singer) every once in a while. People move on, have kids, get jobs etc.. but the love is still there.

Fracture - *One of my fave Dr. Strange releases is 'One False Move' by Boston legends THE FREEZE. You must have a great Clif Hanger story - everyone who has had dealings with him has at least one! Can you tell us one? I understand you are about to release their first two classic albums - 'Land Of The Lost' and 'Rabid Reaction' - on one disc. Any chance of a new album, or another album of out-takes like 'Token Bones'?*

Doc - Clif! Yep, he's a character alright to say the least. A nice guy that needs, let's say 'guidance'. I have a few stories but the one that explains him the most and his problems best is probably when he was talking on the phone to my wife 'Crystal'. That got his mind thinking... To make a long story short he wanted my wife to buy him some Crystal Meth (Speed) and mail it to him! Yeah right! I love 'One False Move'. I think it's one of the best FREEZE releases yet. It ranks up there with 'The Land of the Lost' and 'Rabid Reaction'. Clif says he does want to record some more stuff. Whether or not I'll do it, time will tell. It'll be a while in any case before they can record.

Fracture - *Lately, you have released a lot of reissues in the form of the GOVERNMENT ISSUE collection, STALAG 13's awesome 'In Control' from '84, the 'Barricaded Suspects' comp and the collection of old Toxic Shock 7"s to name a few. What's made you go down the reissue track so much of late? It also seems that the label has almost ditched that former Pop-Punk tag and is now thrusting itself into a more Hardcore direction - any specific reason for that?*

Doc - Yes, that is on purpose. In the past I've held those bands that I was into when I was younger as 'sacred'. I wouldn't want to release anything new that tried to be the same as that great old sound that I grew up with. Mostly because anyone new couldn't pull it off and secondly because sometimes things should be left alone and not fucked with. I've since changed my mind on that and have actively been searching out my old favourites and looking for new ones as well. I've actually found a NEW band from San Francisco that pull it off GREAT. They're called THE TEXAS THIEVES. They sound like across between: ZERO BOYS, MIA and THE FACTION. They have a split with THE SKULLS and a full length early next year. Very cool band! I'm excited to be able to do something with them.

Fracture - *Wow - sounds a great combination! Having signed bands like SCHLEPROCK, VOODOO GLOWSKULLS, GUTTERMOUTH and of course, FACE TO FACE, do you ever feel that some of the larger labels have used Dr. Strange as a talent scout? You ever been personally head-hunted or approached to work for a larger, corporate label? Alternatively, have any bands approached you with the view of using Dr. Strange as a short cut to mainstream acceptability?*

Doc - Yes, to both. When things were going nuts and selling really well I felt that Dr. Strange was on the major labels scope. They would show up to their gigs and try to 'steal' them away. It was VERY frustrating especially when there was little or nothing I could do. In the end though, as long as a band does what they promise to me, then I can't complain. It's just when they stab you in the back and lie to your face that you get mad. One or two have actually said they wanted to use Dr. Strange as a jumping board and move on to bigger things. It's hard to keep a straight face when you hear that. It's like saying, *"I'm going to save up all my money and buy a bunch of lottery tickets, I just know I'll hit the jackpot that way, don't you?"* You don't start a Punk Rock band when getting signed to a major is your goal. It's crazy.

Fracture - *Moving on, you opened a record store also. When and why did you decide to do that? What was the biggest problem in the set up of that? Do you stock purely records / CD's - or do you go in for the whole Punk caboodle of 'zines, shirts, trousers, etc, etc?*

Doc - That was a real challenge let me tell you. I always thought it would be cool to have a REAL Record store and 6 years ago I did. The first year was very tough but thanks to the mail order and label I was able to pull it off. Now we get people from all over, driving over an hour just to come to the store. It's the biggest selection of Punk Rock in all of California. We sell records, CD's, creepers, boots, leather jackets, posters, studs, belts, patches, shirts, and a hell of a lot more. It's all on the web site - www.drstrange.com... I'm very proud of the store. It's a cool building as well. Built in 1906 it's a historical landmark and was the first Post Office in our city.

Fracture - *What's this I have read about the store having a 'Topless Tuesday'? That happen even in winter? And 'Fecal Friday' sounds even worse! Do you really give stuff away to anyone who brings in a turd? Please, you gotta tell us - what is the worst, most deformed stool anyone has brought in? Anyone try to cheat and bring in a dog-turd?*

Doc - Well we gotta have fun right? It started out as a joke, we don't go topless but in the Summertime it's tempting. The 'Fecal Friday' thing blew my mind. One Friday some kid, maybe about 14 years old or so timidly walks up with a brown paper bag in his hands, slowly puts his right hand in (no glove) and pulls out a piece of shit! I just stared open-mouthed at this small piece of shit. (the shit not the kid!). He said, *"What do I win?"* That was all he said, *"What do I win?"* I didn't know what to say but jokingly I told him he was the second person that day to bring in a shit and we had to award it to the largest one. My buddy and long time right hand man Hot Dog Boy (he's crazy) was standing next to me and quickly said, *"I'll get the other one so we can compare."* I'm thinking, *"Oh-oh, what's going on?"* He walks in the back room where the bathroom is, opens the door and comes back about 3-5 minutes later holding a paper towel with - you guessed it - a piece of fresh shit from his ass! The good news is that it was larger than the kids. The bad news is that it broke apart in two pieces and smelled like death. True story I swear!

Fracture - *The store is in your home town of Cucamonga, which I understand is one of the fastest growing cities in the States yeah? Tell us a bit about Cucamonga and the surrounding area of the shop - I understand it is quite a conservative area with a large Mormon population yeah?*

Doc - Cucamonga is a very nice place. It's about 40 miles east of LA and sits at the base of Mt Baldy. The mountains get snow in the Winter time and it's hotter than hell in the Summer. But I really love it! Nice people and it still has a small town attitude. When I moved out this way about 30 years ago it was the number one vineyard producing (wine) place in California. Has the oldest Winery in California. So why is it that everyone I tell I'm from Cucamonga laughs at me for 5 minutes? I think it's because Johnny Carson and Bugs Bunny both have made fun of the name! Nowadays it's becoming a sea of homes, the 7th fastest growing city in the U.S. and the 11th safest. Lots of Mormons, why I have no idea, and a good mix of people from all aspects of life. Everyone is very cool and there's a ton of kids. It's a city that's alive. I wouldn't say it's conservative. Pretty much a typical city in the U.S. The population is about 150,000, no tall buildings, lots of parks, suburbia at it's best.

Fracture - *You mentioned the building earlier, which I understand has some architectural integrity too, being nearly 100 yeas old yeah? Tell us the history of the building. As it's such a historical building, did you get a lot of hassle off local residents, or the local council because of your ideas for the shop? I have a quote of yours about the local council which states, "At first they were dicks, giving me a lot of crap in regards to what I wanted to do to the building." Has that attitude changed at all?*

Doc - The building is great! I love old stuff and something in California that is nearly 100 years old, is pretty old. I know that's nothing for you guys in the U.K. but it is here. The street I'm on was the main drag, downtown for Cucamonga (Alta Loma actually) and was once the General Store and the first Post Office. across the street is the first Fire Station. It's located in a residential area and when we first moved in it was a dump! Took four months to fix up. The neighbours love us! We keep good care of it, the grass mowed and respect them. What more could they want? City Hall on the other hand is another story. Because it is a Historical Landmark I had to get approval for what was going to be done to the building. I guess all City Halls are assholes. Always after money any way they can get it and I was no exception. After a couple years they've learned to live with Dr. Strange and I think they're happy about it. I think they know I actually care about the city. Hell, more than they do!

Fracture - *Have you ever been robbed? Tell us your thoughts on that. Is there a high crime rate or homeless population in the town of Rancho Cucamonga?*

Doc - No thank God. It is a fear of mine. A new freeway opened up about 7 months ago less than a mile away from the store and when it did (it connects to LA) a LOT of places were getting robbed. Banks, businesses and the like. It hasn't happened yet and I hope it never does. The crime rate in Cucamonga is low, it's just when the 'bad guys' from LA come out.....

Fracture - *How many people are employed under the name of Dr. Strange? Do you like the position of being 'the boss' or is it one of those things that you learn to live with? What makes a good 'boss' and what would you like to think of as the main difference between yourself and, say, the head of a chart-based, corporate record store / label?*

Doc - Let me just say that without the help of my friends (employees you could say) I wouldn't be where I am today. I want to give thanks to Chaddie, Slappy, Thom-Ass, Ting, Travis, my wife Crystal who helps me very much, always there to support me 110% and special thanks to Hot Dog Boy who has been with me for about 9 years. They're all great people and I appreciate them more than they'll know. It's a place that we keep fun. Lots of laughs every day we work. I hate being a 'boss' and do my best not to be. Of course at times there is no choice so I deal with it the best I can. But we're all friends first. We go out for Pizza and Bowling as often as we can, gigs, etc... I'm not sure what makes a 'good' boss but I've had plenty of BAD ones so I try not to repeat what they did to me on my workers. I try to treat others the way I would want to be treated. Not only in a work atmosphere but in life. The difference between me and a CEO of a big company is easy. I see the people that work for me for what they are - PEOPLE. The CEO sees them as replaceable 'things' that can come and go on a whim.

Fracture - *I recently read something about a radio show you were involved with - KUCR 88.3 FM Riverside. Is that a one-off broadcast or a regular item? What are your thoughts on American radio? Is it something you would like to get more involved with, maybe a web broadcast of some form?*

Doc - That was just a one time interview. It was a lot of fun and I always thought it would be kind of cool to have a radio show of my own. I always thought of doing part music (Punk of course) and the other half a comedy soap opera on the air skit like the early days before T.V. Between me and Hot Dog Boy we have a lot of fucked up ideas we could do. For example, there's Officer Leaky. The Policeman that shits and pisses himself uncontrollably. One of these days...

Fracture - *Being an essentially successful businessman - have you had any dimwitted accusations directed your way of 'selling out', becoming part of the 'corporate machine' or any kind of other rubbish as that? Seems like a lot of people who throw such claims need to take a bit of a reality check in many cases. It's clear you have constantly fought to maintain your integrity - do you feel that is an intrinsic part of being a Punk?*

Doc - Honestly, I really haven't had many if any accusations of selling out. I do have a good reputation and it really hasn't come into question. I don't see that happening either. I think the fact that I have been around for 15 years people get to know me and who I am and what I believe in. I have a proven track record to fall back on as proof.

Fracture - *Continuing the business theme, as you have a label which is successful and a record store which is successful - does the economic state of America ever worry / concern you?*

Doc - It did and still does to some degree but not as much. Punk Rock, especially RARE Punk Rock hasn't been affected by the bad times as of yet. As a business I've been through Reagan, Bush, Clinton and now the other Bush. Good times and bad and things are still going well. I have realistic goals and I'm willing to work hard and wait for things. I think that has helped me a lot.

Fracture - *As a label AND a fan, what are your thoughts on downloadable music off the Internet? This is particularly pertinent in the wake of the Recording Industry Association of America attempting to sue 261 people who have apparently violated copyright laws by swapping on-line files.*

Doc - I'm still a little mixed on it. I usually let the band decide on that issue. Me personally, I don't mind if they take some songs from my releases, I encourage it and offer it on my site, but when they take the entire thing and don't buy the release it hurts not only me but the band as well. It may wipe out a lot of smaller independent labels and thus a lot of good bands may never be heard.

Fracture - *Do you feel the Internet is making record collectors / music fans lazy? I mean, one of the greatest things has always been rooting through second hand stores and bargain bins to find that long-lost gem. Now, you can just type it into a search engine and hey presto - there it is.*

Doc - I agree with that. Half the fun is the hunt. Taking months or years to find that certain record. Now it's available to the person with the highest limit on his credit card. It isn't the same and I don't think the appreciation is there quite as much.

Fracture - *I understand you travel abroad on record hunting trips! Is travel something you enjoy? How do you think travel aides the make-up of an individual person? Where are your favourite places and which places are high on the list of those you still wish to visit?*

Doc - Crystal and I just got back from our first record collecting trip in years. We went to Sweden and Holland. Travelling is a great experience. It's something everyone needs to do. It does nothing but broaden your horizons and gives you an appreciation and understanding of the world. I like all the places we've been. The UK and Sweden / Holland. They've been full of nice people and great things to see. I always come back with a greater appreciation of my own country as well. Especially our food! Sorry, but it's true.

Fracture - *How much has the Dr. Strange website increased business since it has been up and running? How essential do you feel a webpage is to the success of any venture today - be it band, label, shop, 'zine?*

Doc - More than I would have thought and there's still a lot of room to grow. The web site is a part of the reason I'm able to keep releasing CD's. The label actually loses money and is just for the fun it. Because the web site does well I'm able to continue with the label. Maybe not a smart 'business' move but a fun one. Depending on what type of business you're doing, it's pretty crucial to have a web site. Now, anyone in the world that has a computer has Dr. Strange. What a great thing! Like my slogan says - *"Destroying Society One Mind at a Time."*

Fracture - *Coming off music for a while - where do you lay politically? I have another quote of yours; "When I first started voting, I voted the Peace and Freedom Party; but I came to realize that it was a wasted vote." Is any vote a wasted vote? What do you put voting apathy down too - is it just laziness, or is it because there is genuinely nothing there to endorse?*

Doc - I'm a registered Democrat but I still believe that they're all a bunch of fuckers and for the most part only concerned with getting re-elected. Sad but true. I've voted since I was 18. The first election I voted in was against Ronald Reagan (the worst piece of crap there was in my opinion). I think to be strong as a country, as a whole, we need to be sure those who are less fortunate are helped out. In all honesty I don't think that is 'right', I just think things run better when they are. Otherwise crime rates go up, unemployment rises etc. Just like it is right now. I understand and agree with the idea of working hard and earning what you have. If you're not willing to do that, that's YOUR fault and you shouldn't be bailed out. You live with it. I agree with that but like I said, that just doesn't seem to work. I still vote in every election. Many have died for my right to do so and if I don't vote, I can't complain. As for others, especially in the US, many people don't vote. I think mostly because they think it won't make a difference, or they just don't care or things are generally 'okay' with their lives.

Fracture - *What are your views on the Bush administration? Do you think he'll get his second term and if so, what does that mean for the state of America? Who do you feel is the best person to tackle his Presidency? Michael Moore seems to have a lot of faith in General Wesley Clark - what do you know about him? Hell - should Michael Moore run for it himself?*

Doc - 'President' Bush is not my president. I didn't vote for him and the majority of Americans didn't vote for him. He is the most embarrassing president in recent history and my biggest fear is that most of the world, especially the UK / Europe, actually thinks he represents the majority of the people living in the United States. He does NOT. He will NOT be re-elected. I think Clinton was the BEST president the U.S. has ever had (or at least top 5).

The Doctor performs one of his many "tricks". You should see this guy roll over!

NED
Neat Neat Neat
99
face to face
no authority
"THE BOLLWEEVILS"
HEAVYWEIGHT
THE FEDS
CHICAGO BUREAU
RHYTHM COLLISION
OUR DISEASE IS GROWING

The Doc shows off more of his old tricks, the dirty little bugger!

Look at his record. It's that simple. Things were great for everyone when he was there. Not true today. Bush destroyed so much hard work in so little time. It's hard to believe. Who can beat Bush? Well, if you read the recent polls pretty much any of the Democrats. There's a long way to go still and time will tell. I haven't made up my mind yet on any of them. As long as Bush goes down I'll be happy. And as far as Moore goes, he's on the same scale as Bush to me. Never cared for that guy. He's a self righteous blow-hard looking for a bigger and better movie deal.

Fracture - *What are your views on Arnold Schwarzenegger being the new Governor of California? You feel concerned that a guy who said "Don't worry about that," regarding the environment; stated "The public doesn't care about figures," in reference to his economic policy and on marriage "I think that gay marriage should be between a man and a woman," is in charge of the world's fifth biggest economy - YOUR economy?*

Doc - Ha! Well put. Even I haven't heard of those quotes. Okay, as I said before, I am a registered Democrat. But believe it or not, I actually DID vote for Arnold. No, I'm serious! Let me tell you why. I voted YES on the recall of Gray Davis (our ex-Governor) because the guy was a crook. Bought and sold by the highest bidder. The Recall was also great, in my opinion, because it's a firm reminder to all politicians that they work for US. We are their bosses and it's good to let them know they can be fired when they REALLY fuck up. Yes, Arnold has no experience in Politics. My argument is that is a good thing. Like I said before, I think all politicians are a bunch of crooks only interested in getting re-elected. That leads them up the path of being bought by the richest lobbiest. I think, and hope, Arnold doesn't care about that. He's financially set for life so he can't be bought and ultimately, can he do any worse than the others? He's more 'one of the common people' than any politician and even though he's a Republican, his policies are very mixed and middle of the road. NOT a true Republican in any sense. This guy started with NOTHING, came to America and made something out of himself. He has a unique perspective and no matter what happens I think we'll be better off. It'll be a lot of fun in any case. Oh, and I wanted to keep the myth alive that all people from California are a bunch of nuts (we really are!)

Fracture - *What are the best and worst aspects of life in America and American culture itself?*

Doc - Well it's tough to say. I'm biased of course. I love the United States. I sincerely believe we have one of the best countries in the world. Even for all our faults. The people here are kind, generous and caring. It's a place where the only limit to success is yourself. If you have the drive and determination there is nothing you can't achieve. I am a perfect example of that. Had an idea, was / is a workaholic and presto, here I am! I wouldn't live anywhere else but here.

Fracture - *If you had not found Punk Rock, what would you be doing now? Take a guess at what your vocation in life would be.*

Doc - That's a great question! Well, my second love is Star Trek so I guess I would be at a Star Trek convention in some bum-fuck city somewhere! In between conventions I'd be eating donuts while watching The Simpsons. Wait, I already do that!

Fracture - *What are your views on the Holidays In The Sun shows? You have worked with a few of the bands that frequently grace such events - COCK SPARRER and PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES spring to mind at least. You see it as a valuable history lesson for those who missed those bands first time round, or as the very epitome of what Punk set out to destroy - an aging, bloated, pedestrian dinosaur?*

Doc - Ha! A little of both actually depending on the band. Some bands can pull it off and still have the 'fire'. Others on the other hand should have called it quits years ago. It's up to you to decide where they fall. In any event I think it's pretty cool having so many Punks of all ages together at the same time. It's good for that reason alone.

Fracture - *Having been involved within Punk Rock for over 20 years, do you feel all the changes it has undergone have made things better, or worse? I'm thinking of particular quote of yours where you state, regarding that first show you attended by the DICKIES back in '81, that "You had a feeling you were doing something wrong. I miss that feel nowadays."*

Doc - Punk Rock isn't the same, there's no doubt about it. I do think things were better then than now. To be a Punk was to be something. It took guts, it was a real movement and a real scene. People today don't have a clue. I remember when you saw another Punk you had an instant friend and ally. When the cops were always after you, when people would laugh at you or try to start fights for having a mowhawk or coloured hair or pierced ears. Now you can't do anything to make yourself stand out from the rest of society short of cutting off your ear. The main difference is the state of the world I guess. When I was a kid there was a real fear of total nuclear annihilation with the Soviet Union. It was so bad that my buddies and I even had a plan to meet at friends house for one last beer when the missiles finally came. It was something we all thought of and talked about on a regular basis. We, as Punks, had a common enemy; Reagan, Thatcher and governments in general. For right or wrong it was a true movement. I don't think most of the younger kids know that. How and why would they?

Fracture - *What are your next plans for the record label? I understand that among your next releases is a split featuring the old UK Anarcho band FLUX OF PINK INDIANS? How did you hook up with those guys - is this new stuff? Any other old HC classics you are hoping to reissue?*

Doc - I got an e-mail from Kev of FLUX OF PINK INDIANS and became friendly with him. He spoke with Colin and they gave the okay to release some of their old stuff including the band that became FLUX OF PINK INDIANS; THE EPILEPTICS. At the same time (this month) I'll release THE FREEZE CD 'Land of the Lost / Rabid Reaction' and this month THE SKULLS / TEXAS THIEVES 7" EP 'split'. Then soon after a new 7"ep., from BROKEN BONES and then early next year BROKEN BONES CD, THE CHEIFS CD, EXTERNAL MENACE, TEXAS THIEVES, and a few more in the works... All great stuff, I can't wait!

Fracture - *Have you any plans to go into the realms of book printing or video? Would you consider a video compilation of the Dr. Strange bands with snippets of the Dr. Strange staff inter spread - much like the recent Recess Records video? What about the store - would you consider opening another store, say on the East Coast?*

Doc - I'm working right now on having free videos on my web site. I have a lot of footage. I'm happy with the way things are in regards to the store. I couldn't imagine opening another store. It's just so much work and I'm happy with what I have. I think having another store would give me a heart attack! And besides anyone with a computer can access the web site.

Fracture - *Lastly, have you any advice for anyone thinking of starting a label or attempting to open a shop?*

Doc - Yes. Just go for it! What's worse? Trying to do something and failing or never trying it at all? As long as you have a passion for something you should go for it. Believe in YOURSELF.

Fracture - *Anything else you would like to add, tell us about, abuse or amuse?*

Doc - I just want to give a sincere *"thank you"* to you Steve for taking the time to get all these questions together. It took a lot of time and thought and I appreciate it. I've been asked to do interviews before but never one so well thought out. People like you and Dave / Fracture are some of the greatest things about doing what I do - the chance to meet other people with similar ideas and values from around the world. Punk Rock, even though it has changed a lot in the past, still has a lot of close knit family ties and 'zines like Fracture and people like you are examples of that. Thanks to all of you who have taken the time to read this. Punk Rock will never die....

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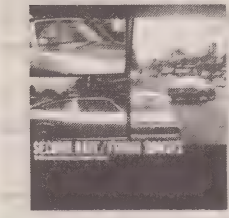

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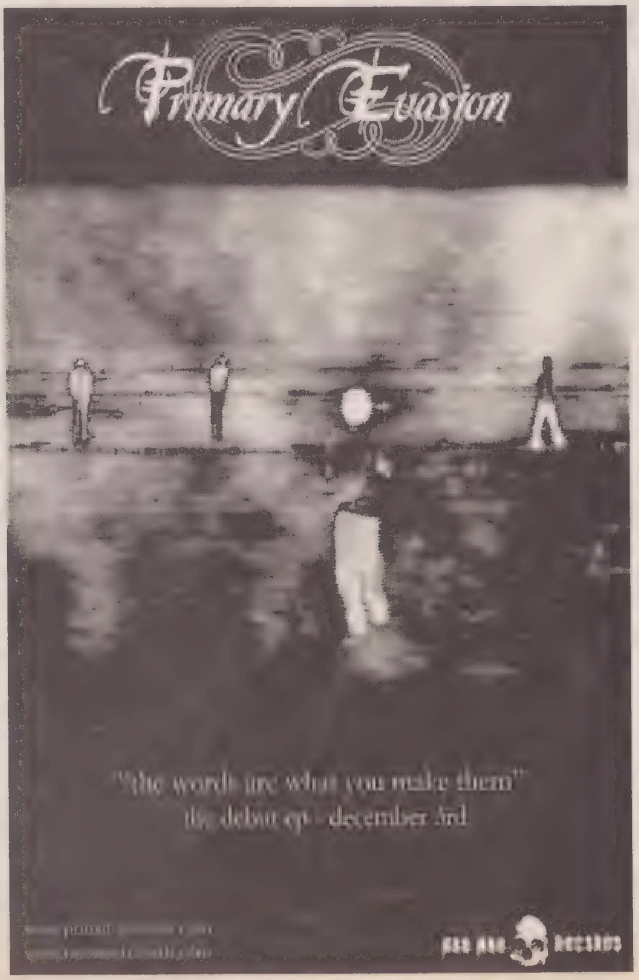
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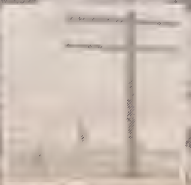
NO CHOICE

Sometimes fate has a habit of dealing you four aces in a row. That's how we felt when the lead singer of Cardiff band NO CHOICE came around to drop in a copy of their "Try and You Might... Don't and You Most Certainly Won't" anthology CD for review in Fracture. Up until then I had no idea who NO CHOICE were. I had, though, heard of their second incarnation SAND from 1992, although I never saw them play. I just knew that Welly (from FOUR LETTER WORD) had done the sleeve design for their 7", and that they were from Cardiff. Together with the anthology CD was a demo of new tracks, as they had been playing (and recording) again as NO CHOICE. After leaving it on the shelf for a day or two, I figured I better play it, even though worried it was going to be dreadful - as I had absolutely no idea what they sounded like. 15 seconds in, I was blown away. It felt like PEGBOY and LEATHERFACE were living over the road. I honestly could not believe how fresh, powerful, vibrant and truly brilliant the tracks "Grip", "Sonny", "Dry River Fishing", "The Prize" and "Wonderland" were... within a week I had emailed them to say that Jo and I were starting a record label and we wanted them to record more tracks for an album - which was to be our first release. A year and a half on and NO CHOICE are gathering momentum every single day. They spent a couple of days this summer recording two new tracks for a split 7" with Canada's FIFTH HOUR HERO (which is to be released on No Idea Records in the US) and they are now currently working towards a month long US tour with the truly great AGAINST ME! So for our second out of three interviews with the best bands my home town, Cardiff, has to offer, I give you NO CHOICE.

Interview by Monk Dave.

Fracture - *So you have been around for over 20 years now, in one incarnation or another... for those who don't know, can you please give us a full, concise history of the band, up to the present day...*

Gagz - Our history is as concise as it can be in the booklet of our "Try and You Might..." Anthology CD, but for anyone that doesn't have that, NO CHOICE came about after myself and Martin were doing our usual jamming on the top floor of an old malthouse in Cardiff, me on drums and vocals, and Martin on guitar and vocals. We were making enough noise for three nosey scallies to stick their heads around the door and ask "what we were up to". Terry said he needed drums, Martin said we needed a drummer, Svend could play bass, they knew I could shout, and so, apparently, could Cid. After a few practices we came up with the name NO CHOICE, mainly because of the frustration we all felt and sheer will to do something and vent this anger from within out into the world. Every government had let the working class down and we had "No Choice" but to fight back, albeit with a plectrum, but hey, it was a start. After giving our first demo to Chaos of CHAOS UK, Simon from Riot City Records offered to put out a single - "Sadist Dream" with "Nuclear Disaster" and "Cream of The Crop" on the B-side. We did a few gigs and split up before we really gave it a go. Line-up two consisted of Ada - bass, Jake - drums, Gagz - vocals and Martin - guitar / vocals. With this line-up we enjoyed many good gigs supporting good causes, most important to us at that time being the Miners' strike in the 80's and anti-apartheid movement gigs. We also recorded the six track demo "Question Time", although I filled in on bass as Ada couldn't make it. Jake then moved away and Steve took over drums, Martin moved onto bass and Ada onto guitar, and again we were up and running. Terry came back as Steve departed and we went gigging for a while until the fun went - though we never fell out and remained good friends. After playing soccer and enjoying our kids growing up, myself, Terry and Ada roped in Tim, an ex-ICONS OF FILTH bassist, and gigged under the name SAND. We recorded a 7 track, titled "A Tape of Two Halves" and a self funded 7" EP, "Lever, Neurosis, Hysteria" with the tracks "To Me You're That Important", "72 - 92" and "All This And More", but we didn't really push it at all, and still have copies to give away! We played a few gigs, and again took our feet off the gas and let it chill for a bit. But old punks never die, and I'm glad to say that we got the bug again - back to basics, and recording under the name NO CHOICE once more. We kicked into gear properly when Paul replied to an advert in Spillers (local independent record shop) that I had put in there for a bass player, and as soon as he turned up he was just an amazing bass player, and he had ideas as well. He was into the same sort of stuff we were, and he's a really infectious character. It was great having him on board, and together with Terry's abilities on the drums to play different styles Terry just loved it - having a bass player he could really work with. Interestingly enough, the bloke who phoned up the day before we were about to give Paul his first practice was Kaney, asking to play bass, even though he's a guitarist. I told him that we had to give Paul a chance first, and he turned out to be a great bass player, so I had to tell him no! He was a bit gutted, but I did tell him that if we needed another guitarist we might give him a call - and that's how Kaney joining on second guitar came about. It was after we supported HOT WATER MUSIC, and they sounded so brilliant we saw the benefit of having two guitarists, plus Ada always wanted to work with another guitarist, as he had lots of ideas for two different



guitar parts on some of our songs, which he could only really achieve in a studio. So we called Kaney up and he's just an amazing guitarist. It's worked out really well.

Fracture - *You started in the early 80's, what was Cardiff like for people like you in their late teens back then? I barely remember being 8 or 9, and I remember a lot of bomber jacket wearing skinheads... was there any kind of real punk "scene" back then, or was it more just a collection of pissed off kids with nothing to do?*

Gagz - The punk scene was basically centred around Grass Roots in Charles Street. We'd put on cheap gigs, you could go there on a Friday or Saturday and it would be packed with people who'd all bought their records, showing each other what each other bought that day. We'd talk about the latest thing we'd heard on John Peel, what people liked, then there'd be a gig in the night. People would just get together. It was a ramsnackle of a place, bright green fuckin' chairs, tables and carpets! Just a real old hippie looking place, but it was great. The gigs were packed, you'd have all the mods who would go around town on Saturday's looking for the punks to fight and most of the skinheads would side up with the punks, but some of them would side up with the mods. When you're faced with about 70 or 80 mods running after you, there was generally an air of violence walking around on a Saturday afternoon. One summer I got caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, and had to go to hospital - I broke my nose, and was just black and blue all over. That was just due to walking down the wrong street at the wrong time. You had to be careful. Everyone was keen to show their identities, and there was a lot of arseholes walking around who had just bought the clothes because they wanted to be part of something, but really just didn't get it. But then there was some of the most genuine and honest people who have gone on to have punk shape their way of life. It was great in Cardiff then, there was a real nice scene at the time . I used to go and watch VICTIMISE at Grass Roots, they'd play there quite often, and basically you just made your own fun. There wasn't a lot for people to do other than get in to town or go up to your local community centre, where we just got into reggae and punk. There was a mass of people who would go there and would want to listen to it. Reggae was a big thing with the punks back then as it was a great way of getting black and white kids together and listening to each others music. I remember taking them "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" by THE CLASH and saying "listen to this" and they were just dumbstruck that it was a white band, and thought it was fucking brilliant. So yeah, it was a good time, but under bad conditions with Thatcher's government bringing the jack boot down on the working class. You would make your own fun and go to gigs to get away from the fucking grind of either being on the dole or being in a shit job. The real punks from back then, not the ones that would dress in all the latest fashions, but the genuine punk kids, they've grown up still with that attitude - they've still got a punk mentality, they've evolved and are better people for it. So Cardiff was really good in the early 80's, I enjoyed it, but after '84, when NO CHOICE had finished and a lot of things died away, there was no scene left that I really wanted to hang around in.

Fracture - *What were some of the highlights of being involved in punk back then, when it was still a relatively new form of "rebellion"?*

Gagz - I suppose for me it would be the lasting friendships. The people I met were really genuine. People would turn up to see bands, you would do your own posters, put them everywhere and people would turn up. There was just a general buzz going around, everyone wanted to be involved, no one wanted to miss out on the latest band that was coming out of Cardiff, and if you were any good they'd turn up and see you, and want to speak to you. For me, another highlight would be just feeling like we were on the outside looking in, but also knowing that we had it more sussed than the average kid. We did play out of Cardiff as NO CHOICE, places like Hull and Leeds, but it wasn't actually that many gigs, but Hull for example had the same mentality as Cardiff, they had a good scene going on up there. Generally, these gigs were in support of the miners, for the South Wales pits and the Yorkshire pits, so there was a bond there. The lasting friendships have really benefited me, and the band I supposed, in as much as people still remember you when you go up there. So yeah, basically the highlights were just being involved with a group of people who were mainly, by and large, good people and more sussed than the average kid - politically - and I think there was a real political "flowering" going on. I enjoyed that, and I think that everyone else did as well.

Fracture - *How are things, in terms of music and the band, different now to how they were then? How does a gig in*

P.M. AND KANEY, 2003

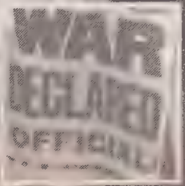
1983 compare to a gig in 2003?

Gagz - With the music I suppose we are just the same as everyone else. We've benefited a lot from the early punk thing, and with all the music that has come along in the last 20 years or so, there's a lot of variety to be influenced by. With Paul in the band now there's some funky stuff going on and there's also bits that we've stuck in, not on purpose, but that has come out of the early 70's, and some 80's US hardcore - there's bits of that in there - so I think we've benefited, as others have, because we've bended our ear to all sorts of different music and, as a result, the band is much better now than it was then. Not so much because of the change in personnel, but because we've all had an ear for music for years now, and all enjoyed it, taken it on board and have tried various things with it. NO CHOICE is definitely a far better proposition now than it was in the 80's.. Regarding the gigs, it's hard to say. We went on tour with AGAINST ME! And had a great time because people came, obviously, to see them, but they would also watch us and that was real pleasing, and we had a good response. I can only remember a handful of gigs in the 80's where we didn't really have a good response, one of them being Leeds. By and large though, gigs are the same now as they were in 1983, but what I do like is the DIY nature that goes with a lot of the gigs we play now. You did have that in the 80's, but you'd have places that would book bands that didn't really give a shit about them, they just wanted to be seen as a ground-breaking musical cross culture. We would be invited to play so we'd go and it would generally just be people there who were there to be seen. I am sure you still get that now. We were also, back then, part of a kind of "gig exchange" where you'd get two bands to come down here, sort out their petrol and food, then you'd play up there place. In Hull they would do that, it was very DIY, but in general I'd say things are not so different now as they were then.

Fracture - *Being such a politically up front band, I guess there's certain things that NO CHOICE would not do... If a punk band comes from a DIY background, and talks the political talk - so to speak - do you think they lose credibility when they become bigger and start to make compromises (even if they are still on an indie label)... STRIKE ANYWHERE having a track on a new Sony Playstation skateboard game, which is also sponsored by McDonalds is a relevant example here... Would there be a lot of discussion within the band if the same offer was made to NO CHOICE, or would it be a simple "no way" all round, regardless of how great the money might be?*

Gagz - Well signing to a major label is obviously not one of them, I have always been up front about that with the guys. There is no way I would do it. I don't sit there, think about things and put it down on paper without it being heart-felt, totally my ideas and ideals from the top of my head straight to the end of the pen. Does a band lose credibility when they start to make compromises? Well of course they fucking do. It doesn't matter whether they're on an indie label or not, everyone knows when compromises are made. You don't have to be a genius to work out when people start playing the MTV game, or start appearing on these Playstation games. As for STRIKE ANYWHERE, what can I say, it really does piss me off. I remember the singer Tom saying, and he was a nice bloke, but he said "Gagz should make more of his time up on stage by telling everyone what these songs are about, they're so political he should get up there and tell everyone how political they are, and make sure they get the message." And now STRIKE ANYWHERE is on a skateboard game sponsored by McDonalds. As far as I am concerned, he's a fucking hypocrite. There's no other word for it. What the fuck is he playing at, what are they playing at? For us it's not something I have an issue with. I wouldn't do it and I'm not going to do it. Everyone knows we wouldn't, and that's not being "holier than thou", it's just me. It's the way I am. And if any of the other members of the band wanted to do it, well they wouldn't even ask anyway. They're all in the same boat as me, and we're just not going to fucking make compromises. We wouldn't do it regardless of how great the money might be, as it just means everything we have done before is irrelevant. At the end of the day they might have three, four, five thousand off it, but what are they going to do with that? Spend it, have a nice time, probably last them a couple of months and then they've got it on their conscience that they've done this. It's hypocritical and ridiculous - short term money and a long term lack of standing, I suppose... it would be nice to say they were naive, but they know exactly what they're doing. I'm a bit surprised at them to be honest, and disappointed. Furthermore, I know that there are other bands that have been on so called indie labels, and signed on to bigger labels - and talk politics - and for them to turn around and say "well listen man, we've been doing this long enough now, it's about time we had something back", I don't necessarily agree with. If they're doing gigs, getting by, enjoying themselves and having a good time then surely that's good enough? They really need to ask themselves why they are in a band, and why they're doing it - and why they've used politics all along, when they're taking the cash now.

Fracture - *Musically, NO CHOICE is most definitely at the best it's ever been. How does the band get away with being a "reformed, old" UK punk band without sounding like a dated old has-been, or trying to live off the glory days of the more well known old tracks like "Cream of The Crop"? Many bands are reforming nowadays, but so obviously for the*



wrong reasons. and you can spot them a mile off... does it bother you that someone who doesn't know the full story of NO CHOICE, or what you sound like now, may lump you into that category?

Gagz - Musically, we're definitely better than we have ever been, and I think we're better live as well (no offence to people that have been in the band before!)... I think if people remember the name of NO CHOICE from first time around they probably do think of "Cream of The Crop" and yeah, it does bother me a bit that we may get lumped in to that category without them listening to "Dry River Fishing", but what can you do? People are people. We just do what we do and they do what they do. They listen to what they want, and hopefully someone might mention to them that they like the album, and that might pique their interest, and they might pick it up - and then they'd see it's obviously not old fucking "street punk", Holidays In The Sun type stuff. We are nothing like a HITS band, although we did play there once! It worked out good for us in that Terry managed to get money for a drum kit, and a lot of people came up and said they didn't expect how we sounded, because they remembered "Cream of The Crop". That was also the last time we played that song, exactly because of that. They're into that, into having a good time, going up there seeing all these bands - some of which are a shell of what they used to be - and that's sad. If we're lumped in to that category, we can't do nothing about it. We don't play on what we used to. It's up to people to judge us on how we are now - we *don't* play the old records. We came back as NO CHOICE because I didn't want to be remembered solely for "Cream of The Crop", I wanted just to write some good stuff, what we thought was good stuff and just get it out there. Not to erase the past, but just to catch the time... time is relevant and I think the album does that, and so I am very proud of that album. I think it's a good perception of the time right now, the angst and disillusionment of everyone in this country, after having a Tory government for so many fucking years, now seeing Labour just being a continuation of that. Hopefully, we won't always be lumped in with that whole Holidays In The Sun perception of us, but if we do, there's fuck all we can do except keep doing our own thing.

Fracture - *On the most recent album and the new split 7" with FIFTH HOUR HERO, you cover many topics that all come from a definite "leftist" perspective... from George W. Bush's propagandistic war machine to the UK's anti-immigrant racism, from a vicious disdain of the Royal Family to the tedium of the office worker's 9 to 5 existence ("The Prize")... where does NO CHOICE stand politically, and how do they take these beliefs out of the music and through to their everyday lives?*

Gagz - I'm a Socialist and my politics are to the left, way left of Labour. The lyrics cover lots of different aspects of life, from green issues with "Dry River Fishing" to, as you say, the 9 to 5 thing with "The Prize"... most weeks I'll just take little notes and watch people as they go through their lives. You see different people's different perspectives on what they want out of life, and how it differs to yours, and you try and put yourself in their position - seeing that the mundane will do... I can't stand it, so there's always something to write about, especially now. For NO CHOICE to be that political, well there's no choice at all. It's a very, very dangerous time we live in. Regarding how we take these beliefs into our everyday lives, well I can only really speak for myself here, I just do my best and treat people with the respect I think they deserve, and if they do the same to me, and are not oppressive, racist or bigoted in anyway, then they'll get my full attention, cooperation and friendship. If they don't, you don't deal with people like that. You can't change everyone. I can't go around telling everyone they're wrong, what I can do is put my beliefs into these songs. I do have arguments over politics, and the worst place to have them is in pubs! And I am a bit fucking vocal when it comes to that, and I stand my ground, so to speak, and it does get to the stage where you sometimes think you just need to loosen up a bit and just fucking leave it. I live my life as I see it, and how I believe people should live theirs, with respect for others, and give those who are less fortunate your time and energies, friendship and help. If everybody did the same, the world would be a better place. That's as much as I can do, I can't do much more than write about things. We do cover a lot of topics, but that's not just art for arts sake, it's just what I see and how I perceive certain situations to be right and wrong. That's all anyone does I suppose. If you can go through life being as good a person as you can, then at the end of it you'll have something to be happy with. I will keep writing, and standing my corner with lyrics because they are honest and they are me. And I am not ever going to change them.

1983 AGAIN

Fracture - *You did a UK tour with AGAINST ME! at the beginning of 2003, and have since then played a few gigs in different towns around the country, as well as having an album, an anthology CD of your old stuff on GTA, and a 7" out - how, in general, have your experiences with the DIY punk scene been so far? Being that you were out of the loop for a while, was it surprising to you just how much of a thriving underground scene there actually was going on both here and abroad?*

Gagz - I have been impressed, I like it. There's a lot that needs to be said for the small venues, people doing these gigs, basically using up their time just to get bands to play, and trying to help bands get around the country. I think it's

KANEY, GAGZ AND ADA, 2003

really a positive thing. I have always done things on an underground level, and I have always been aware that the DIY scene is there and have always been a fan of it. But as you said, when we were out of it for so long, like with SAND, we came back into it and we were surprised. You know, we went to places like Brighton and Leeds, which has got a big scene, and even Cardiff, that gig with AGAINST ME! Was sold out and over 100 people were turned away. I was really surprised, probably because they were on No Idea and they were having good press, but I was still amazing that Cardiff would turn out in numbers like that. I was very grateful, and also happy in the fact that it wasn't just places like Brighton and Leeds that turned out in force, because it was everywhere, like up in Kirkcaldy and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne… but it was nice that Cardiff was on the same level and felt like it had a burgeoning scene here too, thanks to people like Tom doing gigs down in the Oz Bar, trying to keep things going, because that's what he's into. He doesn't take a lot of money and he's giving people back really good gigs. It's great. I have been surprised, I don't know what it's like abroad yet because we haven't been there, but I am sure I am going to be very, very happy when we go over there and I am sure that the underground scene in America is the same as over here. It's a very positive thing, and a real throw-back to the old days. A lot of the gigs are benefits for things like political prisoners or rape crisis, important issues are being discussed and helped with this DIY scene, and I suppose that is the most important thing. Apart from people having a good time, the DIY scene actually promotes and helps organisations that need help. Long may it continue.

Fracture - *What's the next year looking like for NO CHOICE? Your US tour with AGAINST ME! (and others) has finally been confirmed for April 2004, this must surely be seen as something that happens to a small UK band once in a life-time, right? What will the band be working on, musically - a new album?*

Gagz - We are all looking forward to the US tour with AGAINST ME!, it is something that we never, ever anticipated. We've never even anticipated going *on* a tour, we've always been at the arse end punk, sometimes annoyed with that, but sometimes just accepting that we've never been a band that goes out of our way to play too many gigs! We still never expected anyone to put us that UK tour, and it was an amazing time, and now the offshoot of that is that we got along with AGAINST ME! they liked what we were doing and I suppose they saw a conviction in us which they might not have seen in others, which was nice. So yeah, we're going to America, and I know we knock America, but the one thing about it is, as Michael Moore proved, there's a fantastic amount of people who are very, very unhappy with George Bush and the American system. And us going over there and being able to play tracks like "The Eleventh Hour" which obviously deals with George Bush, and other leftist issues - to sing, and be able to meet people and discuss these issues with people over there, although maybe preaching to the converted, granted, but I am sure I will learn things off them and hopefully they'll learn something from us. Perhaps that you can still breath after 40! But yeah, it's a once in a lifetime thing I suppose. Financially it is pretty crippling, but we're not going over there with any other intention other than to have a really great time and meet some people that we can share our views and ideals with. Anything else is a bonus. As for record sales, as you know, we have never worried about that. We just do our thing and that's it. We're gonna do this tour, come back and definitely, hopefully anyway, get an album out by December. Next year I am looking forward to a lot, who knows what's after that. I certainly don't look too far in to the future, we just do what we do and never think about setting ourselves targets or anything like that. After doing this on and off for twenty years, to finally have some recognition, and people actually liking our stuff, is not just surprising and humbling, it's very, very nice. Perhaps all these hours with the pen, and Ada with his plectrum, and Terry hitting shit out of his drums has paid off - in as much as we're doing the US tour, we'll have a chance at going around the UK again and we are getting to record another album. If nothing else happens, it's been fantastic. It's been 20 documented years of learning. Plus, it's great for us being on Newest Industry as it's the type of label we would have wanted to do releases on, but also to bring something out on No Idea, the split single with FIFTH HOUR HERO, is absolutely fantastic and obviously we're grateful to both yourselves and Var.

Fracture - *That's it, so is there anything else you want to add at all, some information, etc…?*

Gagz - The dates for the US tour are April 1st to May 2nd, that's with AGAINST ME!, ourselves, PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS and NONE MORE BLACK. Also, people should pick up books and read. The two latest books I've read were Michael Moore's "Stupid White Men" and "Dude, Where's My Country?", which I am on now. I am not telling people to buy them, but if they are looking for a book to read, something to get for Christmas, buy them! Finally, if I had to say two words to everyone, it wouldn't be *"fuck off"* it would be *"question everything"*… that's it.

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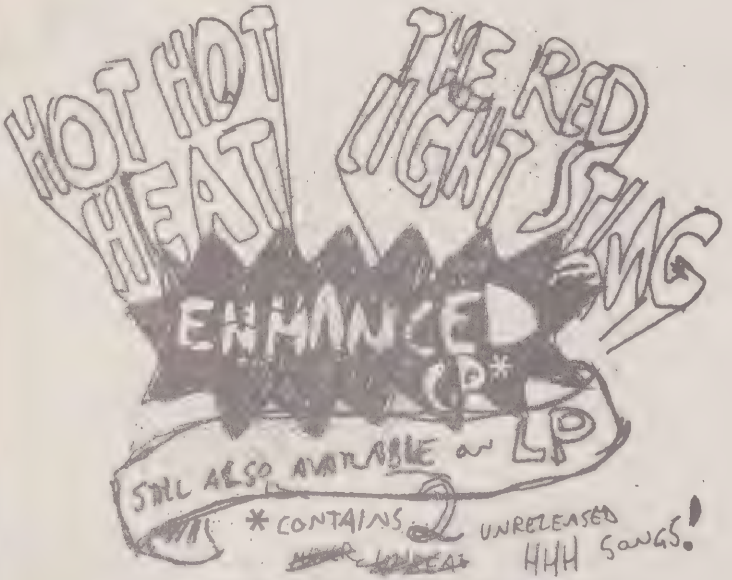

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At some point during the night of the 28th March 1987 at a NEGAZIONE gig in Zürich, Switzerland, I bought a copy of Flipside, Summer '86 edition, from some dude's distro. Featured inside was a German scene report by a person called Dolf Hermannstädter, who mentioned that he and a group of scenesters had joined together to create a fanzine, the name of which was called TRUST. A short while later, a great record shop in Zürich started stocking Trust and over the next year and a half I regularly picked up new issues. Wind the clock forward some 13 years, and having recently taken up reviewing the German language zines for Fracture, I am once again reading Trust on a regular basis. At the start of this year with the countdown underway to the 100th issue release of Trust (June 2003) - an amazing feat in itself and the first of its kind (as far as I know) for a punk / hardcore / underground fanzine in Europe - I felt compelled to get an interview with Dolf, primarily to mark this occasion, but also because fanzines are rarely afforded the same publicity or coverage as bands, and whether they are viewed as a source of information or functioning as a forum for bands, labels, scenesters, and fans alike to come together; fanzines play an essential role in supporting the alternative / underground scene. The bulk of this interview was carried out in Dolf's living room on the 28th March 2003, and only later whilst writing this introduction did I realise that this date was in fact 16 years to the day after my first encounter with Trust!

Interview by Thomas Craven.

Fracture - *To start the ball rolling, how did you first get into punk and hardcore?*

Dolf - The very first time I was connected with punk was in 1979, when we were supposed to bring records to our music classes at school & I was unhappy because my Rocky Horror Picture Show record did not get played but this Sex Pistols crap. That was like the first time I... you know I heard music of course, you read in certain music magazines that there are punks and all that. We had punks in my hometown, Augsburg, but they were older people & I was like 12 or something and of course you were scared of them because their behaviour back then was not like "we are nice", but "we are tough & we are mean". I think the first time I got into reading fanzines, there was a zine coming from Augsburg, in maybe 1980, or '81, and it was called Antz. I was looking at it in a record store, and it just looked like nothing you usually see, it was A5 and hand copied & I opened it up and read "fucking bullshit" and then it continued in German with something like "all the punks that came away from the venue were really pissed off because the show did not happen". I was so impressed by reading "fucking bullshit" in a German media that I immediately bought those fanzines & then it just went on from there, borrowing records, starting to go to shows....

Fracture - *How did Trust come together?*

That all happened years later because at first I was involved with pen pals all over the world, writing & trading tapes. You know, "how's your scene doing?"... "what's going on in your home town?", "what kind of bands do you have?" That's what people did back then because it was before the internet and there was always excitement because you had to spend money on the letters that you sent out and you had to hand-write them or maybe with a typewriter... that was my involvement in the scene...

Fracture - *Had you already done some fanzines yourself?*

Dolf - We did one that was called "Scheisshausen News", (Shithouse News) but that was just 2 or 3 issues. That was in 1982, or 1983 ... it wasn't my main project but rather participating with it and I was also helping out INFERNO back then. Nowadays you would say I was their manager but back then there was no such thing as a manager in punk! That's when I also got involved in doing more stuff for that band, dealing with labels. I got in touch with Pushead in order to get that Pushead drawing for the band (for their LP cover. ed) ... things like that which a manager usually does. Then we got into an argument and we split... nowadays everything is cool! It was a long time

TRUST

ago! The founding of Trust happened in Heidenheim, because we started before that to have people from Southern Germany, activist people that did things for the punk scene, or interested in the scene, that we met at shows. We figured we needed to maybe also get together not just at shows - there were not that many back then - and we had to travel to go to Kempten, or Leutkirchen, various cities, because bands weren't playing all the time and we decided that we shouldn't only meet for shows. It's kind of limited, because you go there, then the band plays you can't really talk because there are so many other people… so in order to get to know each other on a private level we had these meetings in Heidenheim. We had a nice space there where we could meet & drink and chat. One of the last bigger meetings we had there was 45 people from all over southern Germany which is nothing for nowadays, but back then it was amazing that there's people from Kempten, Augsburg, Munich, Homburg, Heidenheim in there for the same reason & for the same interests, so that was very special. On that evening we decided that we need a medium, a fanzine, because back then you couldn't open up say Spex and see punk gig dates or read about punk bands or record reviews about cool hardcore bands, there was nothing… Rock Hard was strictly metal, Visions was not born, Intro was not born. The whole media landscape for punk back then was not there. Therefore we thought if we are that many people we also should have a medium that's coming out on a regular basis in order to fill that gap. Well, there was no gap because it was ignored by the media… but to have our own media. There had of course been fanzines before like the A & P from Hanover they also tried to do that, but they stopped. In June 1986 the first issue came out and ever since then, every 8 weeks.

Fracture - *I remember back then it was just four main people involved in the core, right?*

Dolf - The founders were all the people there (at the meeting) but it turned out that it was Armin Hoffmann who is still running X-Mist, Tomasso Schulze who used to sing in Everything Falls Apart… he's completely gone from the punk world & working in the film industry as a film journalist, then there was Moses Arndt who was in Challenger Crew but he also stopped working for Trust a long time ago, and his girlfriend back then Arne Ulrich also no longer in the scene, then there was Mitch Alber who is also, apart from me, the only remaining person from day 1 still working on Trust but he's only doing layout, and then me, and that's about it.

There were always changes, people came then went away again - so many people involved that by now I'm used to things changing. People get older, they lose interest but that's normal I guess, maybe not, but I'm not surprised. Of course I'm happy with the people we have now because some of them have been there for years and don't want to leave yet, which is nice but as you get older, have kids, get a job etc.

Fracture - *When & why did this core of people break up?*

Dolf - That core of people broke up pretty early, I think the first guy that left was Armin, because he was very pissed off about a 7" which should go with issue #20 (I believe), and then Tomasso was not happy about something, generally had enough of things.

Fracture - *At some point in 1987 / '88 Zap Fanzine appeared, published by ex-Trust contributor Moses Arndt… what happened with Trust, Moses and ZAP?*

Dolf - Moses left, actually in the first Zap there was over 50% of stuff that was meant to be for the next Trust and he just took it without telling us and started Zap magazine!!! Actually it was good back then that he was in another town, in Homburg, because we were really fucking mad at him… but that's cooled down also with time… I'm no longer in contact with him, he's now studying medicine. So from the original core of people it was Tomasso, Me & Mitch remaining for a longer period, then Tomasso the last one of the core going away.

Fracture - *What was the situation like after these original people had left - was it like, shit! I'm just left on my own! All these people have gone?*

Dolf - No no, because there were new people coming in doing 1 interview or a few reviews, and while other people from that core went away, other people came closer & closer. I don't want to say replaced those people, you know they are individuals and can't really be replaced but new people started working and it was always… I think there was 1 time period about 7 years ago that was a little shaky because it was before the internet, we never had a meeting where everything gets sorted out, like who's doing reviews etc. Well we never really had that because from the beginning everybody was in different cities so there was a time when it was difficult, but there was some new blood coming in and with the internet it made things easier. Now it's no problem at all that everybody's spread all over Germany.

Fracture - *Okay, an obvious question - what makes you keep going with Trust?*

Dolf - The funny thing is I remember saying that when we founded Trust in Heidenheim, I only wanted to write columns or interviews but I didn't want to be associated with all of the shit work distribution, getting ad's - y'know, all the shit work which is necessary to publish a fanzine. I wasn't interested in that because I knew what kind of work needs to be done and I was not interested in that, I wanted to write. Nowadays, or since a couple of years I hardly write anything anymore myself, apart from a few fanzine or book reviews and my column. That is because I have the feeling that I have said everything in the last 17 years, almost everything! I also talked to all the interesting bands that had something to say, it's not that I'm saying new bands don't have any interesting things to say, it's me that lost interest in talking to 20 year old people coming from Germany, UK or America and saying how great it is to be in Europe on tour. They have all the right in the world to do that, because it's brand new to them, but for me it's my problem. And now of course I've ended up doing all of that shit work just by myself!!!! But that's fine because I wouldn't say that I enjoy everything but I like to organise things and I know that a lot of people working at the magazine would hate that kind of job which is understandable especially if you don't get paid for it - so it's a perfect combination, for the new people who come in, they just do the writing and they hangout backstage with the bands and they enjoy that, and I do the shit work!! There's also a core of people who help me do the shipping out, distribution. It's not that I'm all alone. There's a core of people, if there needs to be some decision making.

Fracture - *Am I right in saying then, that you just keep going because you don't want to not get a "normal" job!?*

Dolf - No, that's not the case. Recently I enjoy publishing more and more. If I look at the media landscape in Germany, or worldwide, it's all bullshit. They say they're into it for the music, and I partly believe that, but the bigger magazines, I don't need to mention them, everybody knows them, but they are full money making machines. They have to employ people that become part of the industry, and then you are putting yourself under a certain amount of pressure and you have to write about the things that the industry, the music machine, wants you to write about. So you end up doing what I call "incoming journalism". If you open up any of those magazines they all have "Band X" because they just put out a new record or "Band B" just did a promo tour etc. Somebody was calling the magazine and saying "OK, there's a reason that you should talk to this band"… we all get those calls, sometimes we agree but not that often. But the people at Trust know what they want to write about. We have an "Outgoing journalism" where people here go and search for bands. Usually, once bands end up in 'those' magazines, they are through, they are boring, they changed, they signed a contract, or they make boring music, or they grew older and think they now have to 'rock out'. The same band could have been in Trust 2 years before that, or a year ago, things go even faster nowadays, and it would have been different because it was a great, new, exciting underground band that nobody knew of. But if you get your average baggy-panted MTV kid that reads on the cover of a magazine 3 bands featured inside that he hasn't even heard the name of, or seen on MTV, then he of course doesn't buy it. They start buying it when it's on the glossy 4 coloured cover and they get the faded out version of what was once a really cool band. That's what they are doing, we are doing something different.

Fracture - *Which zines past and present have influenced you?*

Dolf - Well, definitely influential has been Ripper, from the Bay Area (San Francisco) and MRR and Flipside, then all the German zines. A & P was really cool. Y'know in the past I was really crazy about fanzines I bought and ordered as many as I could get my hands on and reading them from cover to cover. But now, after you've read like over 1500 zines it's just, it's not the same anymore, not because of the quality or the creativity of the publications is changing. I've just read too many fanzines and don't really want to read them anymore. I think that's as honest as it gets, that's just a fact, anybody who's almost 40 and says "oh, I enjoy reading how some kids get into a car, get pissed on their way to a gig, and then cause trouble, blah blah" is lying! You either do that by yourself, or you have read the story so many times before that it's impossible that it can be entertaining anymore.

Fracture - *But surely fanzines don't just write about bands and music... there are also many interesting, fun, informative articles, reports, opinions, etc. which offer an alternative to the mainstream Press... don't you still read at least the non-music stuff?*

Dolf - Correct, I should have said I don't read Fanzines cover to cover anymore like I used to do! I still check fanzines out, browse thru them & when I find something interesting, of course I read it!

Fracture - *Back in 1988, Trust and Maximum Rock'n'Roll collaborated on a photo-zine of European bands entitled "Welcome to cruise country", how did this come about?*

Dolf - I think the general idea came from Helge Schreiber (now with Plastic Bomb zine). We had a connection with MRR. I'd been in touch with Tim Yohannon since the first time I'd been to the USA in 1986. I was living there for 3 months at the MRR house so we communicated a lot and got to know each other, and that's how the idea came about. Helge wanted to do it, Tim liked to do it and we were also into it and the whole thing just happened… For me this photo-zine was a great document. Today you have a lot of punk / hardcore bands featured in the big mainstream magazines, whereas at that point in time almost the only way you could see pictures of these bands, which you knew about, had records of, was from fanzines, or in this case the photo-zine.

Fracture - *What about some of the bands and scenesters who have influenced you?*

Dolf - The bands that influenced me in the beginning…. CRASS, because of their message, DIY / political, doing things by yourself. There wasn't one single band that I would be able to name, or that changed my life. I liked lots of US hardcore bands, European hardcore bands. I've been influenced by their aggressive style of music, or their lyrics or what they did.

Fracture - *How many people are involved today with Trust?*

Dolf - The core of people right now is 6 people, and others write maybe once a years, twice year but it changes all the time, but there's about 16 people… they're scattered over the country, a few in Bremen, 1 in Berlin, 4 in Frankfurt, 2 in Münster, Mitch in Augsburg so they're all over the place.

Fracture - *Who decides what goes into Trust? Is it carried out on a collective basis or are you the boss with complete control?*

Dolf - I have that in theory, but I hardly ever use it, because if people say we want to have something in Trust then it goes in… let's say someone comes along wanting to do a Brittney Spears interview. I would want to know for what reason. If it was someone who was new, it would be different to someone who's been writing for 6 years and I know he has a quality style of writing or a fun attitude then I would say "sure, do it". The only time I would say that something can't happen is either before people start doing things, for example someone says, "let's do TURBONEGRO", I would ask "why would we do that?" You would need to do something very special because they are going to be in every fucking magazine that's coming out in Germany… so we could do it, they would fit into Trust, but why? If of course someone said, "I'm a big fucking fan & I love the band" then it can go in. With new people we give them a chance if they get interested. Their first writings don't have to meet our "standards" of Trust, because if we always have these high standards then we are not going to get any new writers. I don't expect a 17 year old kid to have the same knowledge about music and politics and the same experience in writing as someone who has done it for years… but if it doesn't progress then it's not really what we want. I read everything before it goes to print, to spell-check it, but the decision is made by the individuals. Once in a while if we get one of those "promo calls" to do an interview and I think, well that's a cool band why not? I throw that name in and ask if anybody wants to do something, that this band would be available. If I know that a great band is coming on tour that has no promo company behind them, then I would also say, "hey a great band, somebody want to check it out?" But I don't say, "You've got to do this interview now because we got it offered", people do what they want.

Fracture - *I noticed that you no longer write any music reviews... is it a case of "had enough of the same old noise" and rather leave it to the youngsters who've got more enthusiasm?*

Dolf - Yeah, that's definitely the reason, it started because there was not enough good music and I just lost interest. You can write a couple of times about interesting uh, crust, melody-core bands, whatever, and I just lost my desire to do it. I also didn't want to just write "crust-core", "California punk", it's a description, but not what a review should be all about, and that's why I stopped. Recently I was thinking maybe I should start again, but to me personally out of the 100's of releases we get every month there are so few that I really like and that I think are really special.

Fracture - *Do you make an effort to listen to a lot of them?*

Dolf - I listen to everything that comes in!! If it's complete super mainstream bullshit then I listen to it and it goes away, but even if it's a re-release of some old English punk band or no matter what, I listen to it from the beginning to the end. And the reason for that, maybe this is interesting to you, a little side story - the first time I was in the USA visiting the MRR house I was so shocked by seeing how Tim Yohannon does reviews, because back then I was like every record, with every song reading every lyric, looking at the thanks list, the producers. It was important to know everything, to understand the whole record, to listen to it once, twice, three times. And then I saw how Tim Yohannon did it - and I appreciated his record reviews, y'know you sometimes first read in MRR a record review, and he described the music so well - anyway what he was doing he was just skipping with the needle over the record maybe listening to each song for 10 seconds at the most!! I was like "I will never be like that "… and of course now I understand because if you have to listen to 1000's of records… but back then that was like "fuck you!... you're not dedicating yourself to the record!!". Of course I listen to most to the stuff only once, and of course I don't just sit there and listen to it, I do stuff and it's in the background… I understand that once in a while I will miss some great band that might grow on me if you give it a few more spins, but that's just the way it is.

Fracture - *Apart from a compilation 7" (with X-Mist Records) in 1987 of some new German bands, why did Trust never put out any records?*

Dolf - No that was never our interest. There was a few, we did a few flexi 7"s and that 7" and about 7 years ago there was a CD comp., but that was not really our interest to release records.

Fracture - *So what's the deal with Trust now sporting a barcode on the cover? Some people would say it's a sell out, but is this an issue for you?!*

Dolf - Of course that was always an issue, but then we saw records or other publications with a barcode. If 10 years ago you would have asked me would Trust have a barcode, I would have said "never ever!"... luckily you did not ask me because we now have one!! You've got to look at a barcode for what it is, it's not something evil, but helps you to 'administer' a product. You scan it, you know exactly what it is, what it costs. It just helps to organise things. It doesn't necessarily look nice, it's not a piece of art, but then again it's not like a swastika or something! I still respect people… like Fugazi records don't have barcodes…

Fracture - *Well they put barcode stickers on the wrapping… OK then they put stickers on, then you have to think about why produce 1000's of records without a barcode and then some poor kid has to put on single barcode stickers on every fucking record!! What kind of job is that?*

Dolf - I think it's interesting that a lot of the people who bitch and

TRUST

complain about this kind of stuff don't usually hang around in the scene long enough to make any credible criticism… I'm happy when some 17 year old hardcore kid comes up to me and says "fuck you, you old fart - you're a fucking sell out, we can buy your stupid zine at the train station kiosk, and there's a fucking barcode on there". That's fine, I would still talk to him, I know he's 17. I will not tell him, I will talk to you again in 10 years to see if you have the same strong opinion, and if you have it - cool. And then we will wait another 5 years and we talk again, and if it's *still* there, great! Right on! But I just know most of the people with the biggest mouth complaining about whether it's the barcode or ticket prices they just have a big mouth. I don't say you have to be in the scene 15 years until you are allowed to say something valid. I'm happy to get new, creative, either criticism or ideas. I'm not telling everybody, "you have not been in the scene for 20 years, you know nothing". That's bullshit, that would be arrogant and I don't like people that are in the music scene for so long and behave that way.

Fracture - *On to the next question, how did the distribution of Trust in train stations come about?*

Dolf - In the past, well magazine distribution in Germany is almost monopolised, it's not run like a punk business where you give them a 1000 zines, they sell 800 and then they pay you. The mainstream distribution charges you even before they sell anything. You need to pay them! And that's what kept us away from them… and there's no independent, punk distribution like on the same level. We had our own distribution going, and that was going ok, but then there was a company in Berlin who came along saying we can offer this service for a rate that makes sense for us.

Fracture - *Did they come to you or did you go to them?*

Dolf - They came to us. They were new and needed customers. I did not know these people and we discussed it internally if we should do it, the reason why we should do it etc. The way people find stuff, in the past you had to search, you could only find it in special record stores or mail orders, but things changed and people don't search for stuff anymore, they want to have it immediately. So we said let's give it a try maybe we can sell some, if not we can just stop it again. That's what we did. Then the 1st company in Berlin went belly up, never paid anything. The worst thing was that we never got any serious sales numbers. It was like an experiment, and we invested time and money and we got nothing out of it. If they would have at least told us, "well you sold 2000 but we can't give you any money", that would have been shitty, but still we would have known that we sold 2000 copies. Now there is a new guy who's also doing Ox and Plastic Bomb. We're still in an experimental phase but we're going to continue this because our sales go up from issue to issue through the distribution service and it proved to me people don't want to send off for a zine. They hop on the train, and they want something to read and they pick it up there in the train station. Of course, in the mainstream magazine business if we gave a distributor 200,000 copies then we would sell way more, but that's not in our interest, that's why we have it limited to 2000 now.

Fracture - *Did you ever consider of publishing the 'zine in English, to reach a bigger global audience?*

Dolf - We thought about that in the earlier days in the beginning we had the Foreigner page, written by Lee Hollis (SPERMBIRDS singer) yeah he did it for a while and some others, but it was just a summary of what was in the rest of the zine. But after a while we stopped doing it because we realised that people don't read us that much outside of Germany, obviously because it's all in German! There are lots of English language 'zines, and we would probably lose so many readers in Germany if we did it in English.

Fracture - *I've also made the observation that most of the Ad's in Trust are from the usual collection of labels: REVELATION, B.Y.O, FAT WRECK, JADE TREE, ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES etc. but the bands interviewed and featured in Trust have almost nothing to do with these labels. Is this intentional, to state your independence so to speak?*

Dolf - You're right, we don't interview every Fat Wreck band, but if there was an interesting band on that label then we would interview them. The people that run that label, like Fat Mike, we've known him since the beginning when NOFX was a band playing in front of 15 people and so he knows what we're doing. And he appreciates of course that for their sales it doesn't really matter that much if there's an ad in Trust or not, at least that's what I'm thinking, but they appreciate the work we do and so they support us. Plus it's not that we ignore any Fat Wreck bands just because they're on that label, or any of the other labels. Of course people see that there's no connection between what we write and who our advertising customers are, because there is none. Everybody says that (other magazines. ed), but everybody else is lying!

Fracture - *Is it also the intention to offer something different from the usual interviews with the same old bands featured in many other fanzines?*

Dolf - It just happened like that, because that's what we're doing. The people writing are searching for interesting bands. I think Fat Wreck is a great label, it's just that I don't like all the music on there. They're an independent business, they're just big! I think Jade Tree is a great label, some of the stuff they put out is really good, other stuff I think personally is totally lame! Alternative Tentacle's is a label with a history. It's not that we have these made-up new punk fashion labels, not that I'm saying we would not do that! Anyway, we have a core of advertisers, they know what we're doing and where we're coming from and they also appreciate that we are there and they support us.

Fracture - *Is there a fear though that they'll stop advertising because of this?*

Well of course there is a fear, because if a couple of those big punk companies would stop we would probably have a financial problem if the gap doesn't get filled. On the other hand, if Fat Wreck called us up and said "listen, if you don't feature at least one of our bands in each issue!"… I would say "well we don't work like that". If they put pressure on us, I would probably say to people, "look we are going to lose this ad, somebody wants to interview this band?" then that would still be alright, but if it was "Ok you *have* to interview this band", then I'm sorry but we can't work together any more. At the same time, and that would be the same for any of those labels, if there was still a great release coming out after that, then we would still feature the band because it's about the bands and the music rather than the label.

Fracture - *Are you a little jealous of how Ox fanzine is selling 16,000 copies?! Do you think to yourself, I want to sell this many copies of Trust?*

Dolf - Um, not really. Sometimes I hear they raised their press run again, or they do all these bigger things. For a second I am but then I just need to re-think, why? What they are doing and what we do. I think they're doing a great job with what they're doing, but that's not what I want to do. I don't want a CD with my fanzine, as much as I don't want to have a crate of beer with my fanzine! If you did have a crate of beer with Trust you'd probably sell tons and tons, but people would be buying it for the beer and not the fanzine and we want people to buy the fanzine. It was Joachim, the editor of Ox, I think he said, "it's a fact that there are no more than 2 to 3000 people really interested in what we understand as punk rock in Germany". Then of course if you go to the Bizarre festival there's like 20,000 people all dressed up… Which are mostly the fashion punks…that's fashion you know. They are mainstream people who are not really interested in what we are doing. I'm happy with the way it is right now because it's very stable, it doesn't really go down, it's also not going up because we are not mainstream. Therefore I'm not jealous because I don't have to make decisions, like "we sold all 2000, we need 3000 more printed!" Of course I would do that but that would also mean the thing gets bigger, and then I won't be able to do all the shit work by myself anymore. I might have to hire someone to come in and help me, and then you get in this mill of getting big and you're up to, say, 15 people, you have to make more compromises… and we don't have do make these compromises.

Fracture - *What do you think of the German scene today compared to '86 when Trust first appeared?*

Dolf - You can't compare it, it's different now than it was then, it has nothing to do with each other. To me nowadays scenes come and go faster and faster and are more separate. There's your crust, vegan-emo, whatever, so many separations plus fluctuations. You had back then people who were staying for 5 years, maybe 10 and then left. Nowadays you have people who come in, get themselves tattoos and have a really big mouth about how they're gonna do things and change things and everybody else sucks and then leave after a year!! And go somewhere else, or become part of the music business. That's also happening a lot, they come in and say "fuck this!", "fuck that!" and then go and become the next JIMMY EAT WORLD or something. Therefore I would say there's a scene, but that's my scene, people I've known for a long time, who I get together with, who I'm visiting, etc. Here in Bremen, there are so many different scenes that have nothing to do with each other and are not interested in what the others are doing... Different to back in the old days, where the whole scene was so much smaller - when there was a gig everyone would go...and now you know it's going so fast. You find out about a show and maybe go there and see all these interesting new young people, they have fresh ideas and they look at things differently, and by the time you get to meet one of those people they're already off to college or university. There's nothing left, they don't leave a mark.

Fracture - *As you've already mentioned, you went to USA a few times... you also helped set up Gilman Street right?*

Dolf - I remember there were lots of discussions... there was no leader but of course Tim was there so we tried to make things work, but we talked so much. I was sick of talking because it was clear we need a venue and therefore we do what's necessary to do it, but I don't remember the details. It was just a coincidence that I was there and it happened. I was helping with the MRR radio show and the fanzine and enjoyed doing that and that was the reason why I was there - I was there to witness American punk culture and the best way you can experience that is by going to shows, running a fanzine and be there all the time. With Gilman, they found that space and I was just helping out. I can also do construction work so it was natural that I help.

Fracture - *When you came back to Germany, did you think, "I've learnt some ideas about what I can do for Trust or the music scene" or did you think it was totally different ...*

Dolf - No, I definitely learnt stuff, the experience was worth it. I'm happy that I went and was there at that time, not only because I saw so many great bands but also having an experience with the scene there - and I also knew that certain things should not be the way they are there, here in Germany or in Europe because things had been better in a lot of ways here in Europe. When you get US bands over here, they are always appreciative of the treatment they get, the food etc, whereas back home they don't get jack shit, just get up and play... that's the problem with the American scene because they never formed their own network, there's a couple of venues or people that rent out places all over the States and that's just a few and I would be surprised if it was more than 20...

Fracture - *You mean now?*

Dolf - Now, because they never established that network of people. There's no youth centre situation in the States as it is here. A youth centre in the States can't sell beer. Both countries are too different to really compare them.

Fracture - *You also went to a gig in the World Trade Centre?!!*

Dolf - Yep that's true... the BROOKLYN BUMS sort of a new-swing-rockabilly band they were playing at the "Windows of the World" and we went in the elevator up there. You know surprisingly the beer was pretty cheap! I was like Fuck! I'm in the WTC to see a band, that's gonna cost me an arm and a leg.

Fracture - *So it was an actual venue?*

Dolf - Yeah, it's called the "Windows of the World", that was the name of the restaurant/club and they have shows there - they don't have punk shows, but the BROOKLYN BUMS was almost punk! The beer was affordable!

Fracture - *What did you think when you saw what happened?*

Dolf - I thought, I hope nobody makes a very quick bad decision because if they do that then there might be a major major problem for the whole world. Fortunately no one did that. Of course I've been there and seeing those pictures, it was an experience I could have lived without.

SÜDDEUTSCHES HARDCORE MAGAZIN
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Fracture - *So how are you going to celebrate the 100th issue?*

Dolf - At our last editorial meeting in Frankfurt we thought about what we should do. Do we make it a special celebration issue? The main vibes were like, no, why? Everybody else is doing that, companies etc., but we just go on and we figured lets try and get some of the core people that used to work for Trust and ask them if they want to write something, whatever they feel like, y'know, like Trust sucks!! Whatever! The guy who did the cover for issue 20, which was the first full colour cover in the history of Trust, because like back then, it was issue 20 hey! Come on, that's a reason to celebrate! That guy is working on the cover for #100. We also have a show in Bremen at the Schlachthof on the 7th of June with Hot Water Music, Youth Brigade, Lonely Kings & Craving and that's where we're going to celebrate.

Fracture - *What's in line for the future, just keep going?*

Dolf - Of course, I'm not tired of publishing. I'm growing older and getting more experience. I think I have a pretty good idea of how things work nowadays and I see that hardly anybody reports about it. It shows people there is a difference, you don't have to watch MTV, buy certain magazines and then listen just to the music, there's more behind it and so I enjoy publishing. The people writing for Trust, a lot of them are pretty intelligent and experienced people that have lived their life and they want to do something and that's why I still enjoy it. I'm not saying we're going to celebrate issue #200 in another 17 years because you never know what happens... maybe I have 3 kids to feed!! But at this point in time it's going to go on like it is now, and we're going to progress as time goes by. Recently we had to cut down on the amount of tour dates we have in there, because there's just too many bands touring and we have to find a way to make a fair selection for us... things like that.

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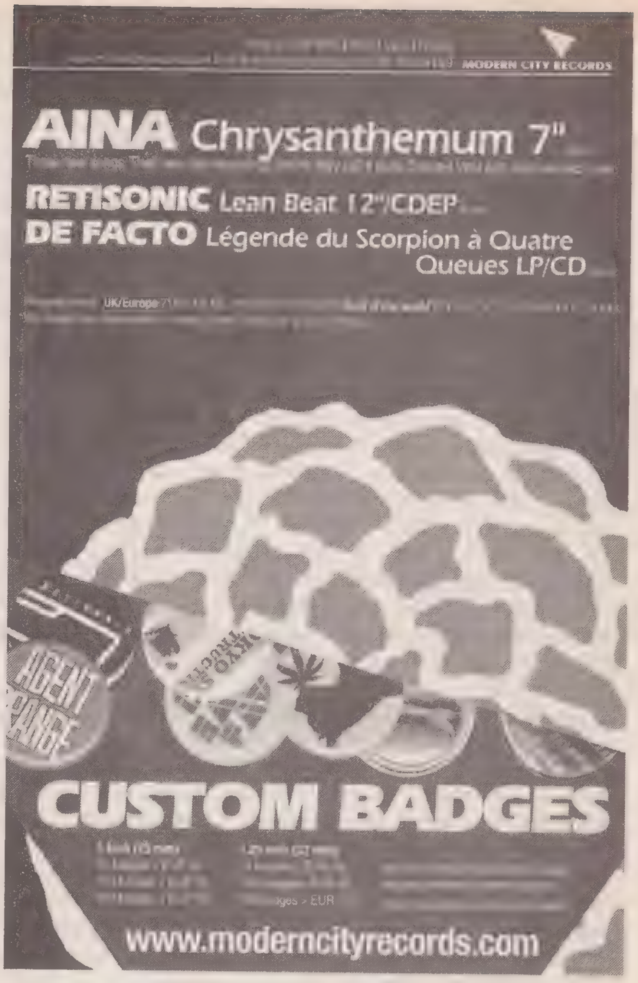

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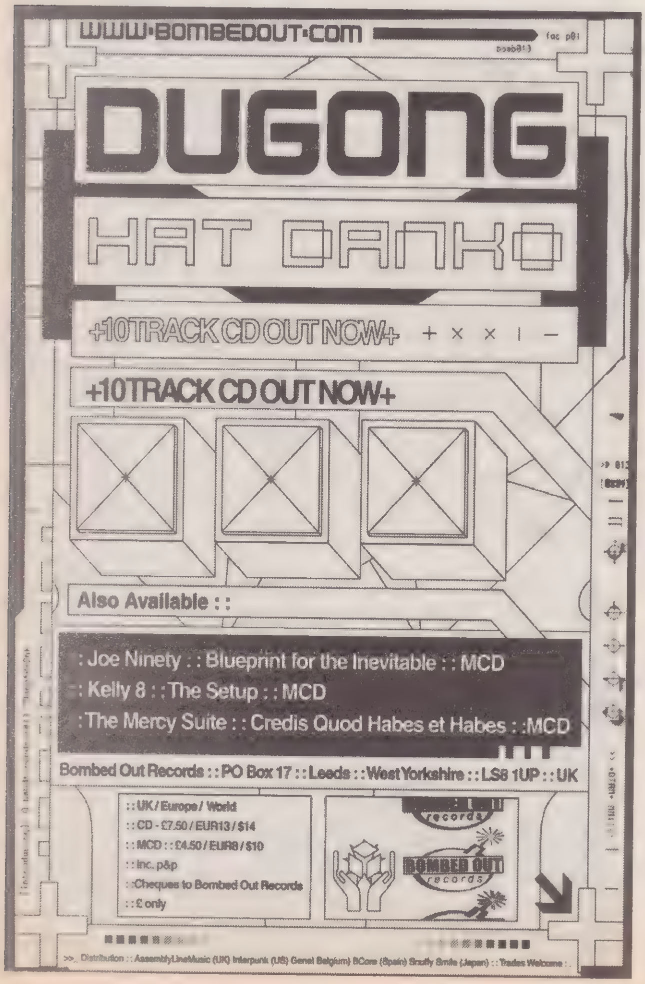

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With their debut album hitting the stores anytime now, it seemed like the perfect time to find out a little more about South London's BLOCKO. As well as being one of the finest bands around right now, they are also the nicest guys you could want to meet. In fact after moving out of London myself a year ago, I really miss hanging out with these guys as I cherish their friendship. I've been promising to interview them for FRACTURE for ages, well here it finally is. Read and enjoy, then go pick up the album, trust me, it is fantastic.

Fracture - *Simple first question… how did you guys hook up? Considering Marc and Nij were "Islanders"!*

Marc - Can't remember what year it was but me and Nij were at the Reading festival. He said he was looking to start a new band and I said I'd love to come and play some drums. We got together a few times over the coming weeks in a practice studio in New Cross, South London, bashed out some songs and asked around to see if anyone knew a bass player that would fit in with what we were doing. Nij asked in now-defunct punk record shop Shake Some Action (RIP) and James the owner said he knew a lad called Lloyd that might be up for it if he had enough time as he'd just had a daughter. About a week later a tape was passed to Lloyd, he seemed to like it and we organised a practice. This was an exciting and nerve racking time but I was really looking forward to seeing how the band would sound as a whole. Like I said I was a little nervous then Lloyd walked in and I nearly shat myself. He's probably the friendliest guy you could ever meet but at the time all I saw was this massive, scary looking motherfucker.

Lloyd - Okay, the story goes (from my perspective) that one day I was down in Shake Some Action, and James told me there was an ad on his board for a bassist to join a band which seemed to share my tastes in music - namely BROCCOLI, HOOTON 3 CAR, DRIVE, LEATHERFACE - that whole UK thing. James knew the guy, Nij, and he knew that I had a bass, but had never progressed beyond my bedroom with it. So, I spoke to Nij, he sent me a four track recording he'd done, and I loved it. So I decided to venture forth into the world of rock, and we arranged a practice. Subsequently we discovered that we had been at numerous gigs together, without having ever met - mostly MEGA CITY FOUR, SENSELESS THINGS and the like. We shared a hell of a lot of musical history before we'd ever met.

Fracture - *What were you up to musically pre-BLOCKO?*

Marc - Years before BLOCKO and I mean years, me and Nij played in a band on The Isle Of Wight called A.M. GEMS with our

best friend Mel. It was great fun, we did about 8 or 9 gigs I seem to remember. There's even a demo out there somewhere. I don't even think it was dissimilar to what BLOCKO sound like now.

Nij - I was living back in the Midlands, working, looking for a band and writing lots of songs on my four track. A few of which ended up on "Oimo" and the next record. The others that have never been recorded will hopefully be re-done, put into our live set and onto record eventually.

Lloyd - Personally, very little on the playing front, but when I was 20 I starting working for MEGA CITY FOUR as a roadie. This lasted almost five years, during which time I also worked with DRIVE, MIDWAY STILL and The DOUGHBOYS, all of which was an amazing experience. Being self employed, that young, and having that sort of responsibility was all exciting, and all the bands became my close friends. I still help Wiz out with IPANEMA, and John with ALL SYSTEMS GO recently. I met so many people who inspired me and continue to influence me, and travelled to many great places. I did play bass on "Paper Tiger" with MC4 on a drunken night in Finland, and the MC4 roadies made two or three stage appearances doing a couple of BAD RELIGION covers. My brother and I also used to record little ditties when we lived together for a while, just for fun. BLOCKO has been the only band I've ever been in.

Fracture - *Now when you first started, you had a sound that was a throwback to the days of HOOTON 3 CAR, BROCCOLI and a sound that had seemed to have disappeared from punk rock. Was it a conscious effort to bring that style back? Or was it just coincidence?*

Nij - I've no particular style in mind when I write, although the first batch of songs were written at a time when I was listening to BROCCOLI, HOOTON 3 CAR and LEATHERFACE. We just do what we do and have never tried to be something we're not.

Lloyd - Again, thinking of how we met and where we all come from musically, it wasn't a "throwback" for us. I guess being of that age, we simply carried our influences from the early / mid 90s and into the year 2000. Plus I think you'll find Nij wrote a lot of those songs a while back but our getting together was the first vehicle for them, some time after. It is simply where we're from, what we love, what we do… totally natural to us. We've always proudly worn our influences on our sleeves, and never shyed away from the fact that we are from that era, and have the birth certificates to prove it!

Marc - We loved and still love those bands. It's stuff we used to listen to and I think the bands that influenced those bands have also influenced us. I really like it that people have said we sound similar to HOOTON 3 CAR and BROCCOLI it's an honour to be mentioned in the same breath. They had a certain English-ness about them that I hope we have too. We've never had a meeting and said… "right, BLOCKO have to sound like this band or that band". That sound just happens when we play together.

Fracture - *I have to admit, when I first heard you, I liked the style, liked the band, but I did have a feeling of "this has been done to death" - I also thought that it may be a style that the "kids" wouldn't get unless they were old enough to remember those aforementioned bands. But as you've progressed, you have forged your own style and moved on considerably, gaining a healthy following in the process… how do you view your own progression and what do you feel about that opinion?*

Lloyd - Yes, I can see what you're getting at. I think though that we never really worried what the "kids" or anyone else thought about our "style". I think we are just totally genuine, influenced by our peers that just so happen to be from a few years previous. In many ways we felt that those bands were the greatest British bands that ever existed, but simply were in the wrong place at the wrong time. I guess we're just carrying their banner. It is an honour to be mentioned in the same breath as those bands, and we'd like to think that might encourage others who perhaps aren't old enough to remember those bands to check them out retrospectively. If people notice a progression, that's great - it's certainly not been something we've worked on. I think we continue to have the courage of our convictions; musically, as a band, and individually within the punk rock world, and I believe it is this, which has driven us on.

Marc - I think Nij has written some amazing songs and his song writing gets better and better. I'm lucky enough to get to play those songs with my friends and maybe throw some ideas in too and when I listen back to the songs I sometimes think; *"that's pretty good, is that really us?"* It's a great feeling.

Nij - These newer songs do sound a bit different to the older stuff. It probably stems from listening to other types of bands like SEAWEED, SHADES APART and HOT WATER MUSIC. I'd like to think there's an element of BLOCKO in there as well!

Fracture - *In line with the last question, I have been surprised at how the music has grown in such a short time. I thought initially that you may have had difficulty moving on, constrained by the style of music you played. But with each new song, I find myself surprised at how far you are pushing your sound without moving away from what you started with. Now this has to do with improvement as songwriters and musicians, but can you envisage a point where you may need to maybe bring in a 2nd guitar? How far can you push the style you play as a 3-piece?*

Lloyd - BROCCOLI were a three piece, DRIVE were a three piece, MIDWAY STILL were a three piece, MOVING TARGETS were a three piece… I think again that our influences again may play a role here! I think that Nij is one of the most amazing guitarists that I have ever seen - he turns the most insane chords into incredibly subtle melodies, and I think that these don't instantly leap from the songs, but draw you in to them. I don't think we'd ever expand to become a four piece, I just don't think it's "us". I also think a lot of the time, especially live… a guitar / bass / drums set up gives you more space for the songs to breathe. Our songs are relatively long too, which allows for them to ebb and flow, which I think is another trait we have. Due

> **"We've always proudly worn our influences on our sleeves, and never shyed away from the fact that we are from that era, and have the birth certificates to prove it!"**

to my limited musical experience prior to this band I think that I'm constantly learning, constantly improving, gaining confidence. Now we've done our new record, we're going to look at writing more stuff together, which is going to be both fun and exciting. Perhaps then we'll see how far we can push it.

Nij - I've never thought too far ahead to be honest. We just look forward to the next gig and putting out a new record. A second guitar doesn't sit comfortably with me. It works great in plenty of other bands, but I think it would restrict me from doing and playing what I want. If the sound was to change dramatically then a second guitar may be needed, but at the moment I don't think things need to change.

Marc - Ha ha, we've talked about this and always came back to the same answer, we like it as it is. There's three of us, we get on pretty well, it might be difficult finding someone to fit in, might put undue strain on the band and anyway Nij is a great guitarist. We do have extra guitars on our upcoming album and even some piano but I still think we'll stay as a three piece live for the time being. No one else would be able to fit on the stage anyway.

Fracture - *Now release-wise, you've put out a 7", an EP and a couple of split 7"s… a lot of bands these days seem to release 15 track CDs after 18 months… usually with dire results. Has it been a conscious decision to wait this long before putting an album out or are you just slow?*

Lloyd - We're just slow! And deliberate. The thing with the songs is that they need to be right, we want them to be good, we don't want to simply become a machine that churns out poor representations of what we are. The first 7" wasn't even meant to be for release, just our first recording as a rough demo. I think we've been surprised really about people's reactions to us, and what we've achieved. I mean, we've never had any goals as such. When we started, we'd have loved to play a few gigs. Then record some songs. Have a vinyl 7". All of these happened. Now we've had a mini CD, a 10" picture disc, coloured vinyl 7", and a Japanese split 7", and the full length to come. These things happening are incredible for us as music fans first and foremost. Our time is constrained in terms of practice by the fact that the only times we can really practice are weekdays in the late afternoon. So we really don't get the chance to do too much. We use as much time as we can to actually go and play gigs, because that's what we love. Pretty soon this may change, as I'm finishing work and so that will hopefully allow for longer and more frequent rehearsals. The album was recorded in March. We had a chance to record in the States with our friends, so we went over for a week and did that. What has taken the time is that Chris mixing the record in Baltimore, and us being in London doesn't really work. We've learned a valuable lesson really, but we didn't know any different. Chris is a great guy, and was very patient with us, but then he had his things to deal with, and then his PC started crashing and corrupting our files and it all started going horribly wrong. He spent a lot of time and money getting the best he could, which we're eternally grateful for. Rich (from K-LINE) has helped us with a couple of minor edits and messed with the EQ a little, and even 'rescued' a song for us, so there is light at the end of the tunnel!

Marc - It's worked out really well; I don't think we've ever really planned anything. We had some songs, about seven, so we recorded them, it wasn't enough for an album so Aston put five of them on our "Oimo" CD, the other two went on split singles. Then came the time we had enough for an album so we recorded them, and hopefully it'll be out by the time you're reading this. Not really any big game plan just grabbing opportunities when they arise.

Fracture - *You've opted to go with Boss Tuneage for these releases, but at one point there was talk of you maybe going with Bombed Out… was that just rumour or was there truth in that?*

Marc - Aston has always had faith in us and helped us out so much, we did do a split single on Bombed out with EIGHTY SIX, have you seen it? It's pink! The Bombed out family have some amazing bands on their label and I would think all their time and money is taken up with those.

Lloyd - Aston, Steve J and also Monk Dave are great friends of ours that we would love to do records for, and hopefully will. Aston was the first person to get back to us about our demo, which to be fair we didn't really circulate widely. He took a chance on us and released our first 7". Since then we've always run things with Aston, just because - well, that's just how it's been! Monk Dave asked about doing an EP at some time in the future, which we'd like. I was only talking to Aston yesterday about whether there would be any mileage in the three of them combining forces under an umbrella label for releases they'd all like to do at some stage.

Fracture - *Now BLOCKO are a well-liked band, not just from a musical angle, but people like you guys and you are a friendly bunch of chappies. But do you feel that "first timers" may be alarmed at what a mean bunch you look? (!)*

Lloyd - It would be easy for people to be put off, I know. It's human nature - I can't change that. In life in general, you should never judge a book by its cover. I'd like to hope that (collectively) our music and (personally) our attitudes are what we are judged on.

Marc - I can see what you mean, three big skinhead cunts. I'm not that big but I am a cunt, heh! We're not mean, we're lovers not fighters, we love to chat to new people, so please come up and say hello next time you see us.

Fracture - *You did a tour of Europe last year - quite a feat for an English band without an album release. How were you received over on the mainland and any plans to go back again in the near future?*

Lloyd - It was simply amazing. We were lucky that we have great friends in STRIKE ANYWHERE and Burkhard - who books tours in Europe - and they basically sorted it all out for us. We had Simon Wells and his van, and it was incredible. We played at a squat in Cologne with OI POLLOI which was interesting! Then a great gig in an old theatre in Oldenburg where they shut half the building and we played on the floor. The people seemed somewhat laid back when we played, but in Hamburg, Berlin and Hannover they were

incredibly enthusiastic when we'd finished, and made us play more - a rarity for us in this country. And of course, Mates and I particularly enjoyed the abundance of free beer, particularly of the Weiss variety! We would love to go again, but with the constraints of work we have to be selective in what we can and (sadly) can't do. We'll see what happens with our album and what transpires at the beginning of next year before making any further plans.

Marc - It was an amazing experience. Hanging out with a load of friends and getting free beer for the privilege. I tell you now I would love to go back over to Europe again. The people were so friendly, at a couple of the gigs they even made us do encores and when I say made, they wouldn't stop shouting, whistling till we played more and that's odd for a non headline band, well I think it is.

Fracture - *You are based in South London, but you seem to have been adopted by the Leeds scene, which is a rarity for a Southern band, but how did that come about do you think?*

Lloyd - I've been friends with Simon and Adam (Collective AKA / Out Of Spite) since meeting them in 1999 on the Hot Water Music tour. They've really looked after us up there and we try and get up there whenever possible, whether we are playing or not. Fortunately, they appear to like BLOCKO too, so we've played some mint gigs there. Plus, the fact that a load of great bands are from the area, who we see when they are in the south, means we have even more friends up there. So going to the Out Of Spite Fest and Juvenile Hall is just like being on the best days out with all your friends. I think too, when we play, we give as good as we get - there's plenty of North / South banter and the like, in the best of spirits and we've never viewed it as a cliquey scene at all, unlike some people. If they don't like you or your band, it doesn't mean they're cliquey. Luckily they seem to like us, and our band. If they don't, there's gonna be trouble!

Marc - I think we have an affinity with the lovely people of Leeds. We love to drink beer and party. Not really sure how it came about, Si Moonhead is probably to blame as are the rest of the Out of Spite people. I always have brilliant times when I go to Leeds.

Fracture - *Now, two of you are postal workers… early mornings and all that. How does that affect the running of the band in terms of playing out of town shows? I'd have thought it'd be mighty awkward to have to deal with getting up at 4am after a gig, even a local one.*

Lloyd - On the first week of our UK tour with STRIKE ANYWHERE last summer, Nij worked every day that week. It was insane. We drove back to Bedford overnight after the gigs so he could get a train to Croydon, then work, then we'd pick him up again. He just catnapped the whole week. It was tough but that's what we had to do. Nij and Mates also took some unpaid leave so we could go to Germany. After playing with HWM in Nottingham this year we drove back and Mates and I went straight to work. I have difficulty at weekends because this is the only time I get to see my daughter so have to plan that too. If we really want to do it we'll find a way. Some opportunities you just can't turn down. Saying that. Marc works about 4 hours a day, sleeps all afternoon and all night, and still moans about not having enough sleep!

Marc - Well I get up at 5:20am it's not that hard when you've had some practice. I find going to work still drunk or tired helps to relieve the boredom and anyway what's more important punk rock or Royal fucking Mail? That last UK tour we did with STRIKE ANYWHERE was tough. It was hard for all of us, especially Nij but as I heard him say himself, he's a soldier.

Nij - We all work around our day jobs the best we can and seem to cope with gigging okay, although we haven't been able to say yes to every show. You do get used to the early starts. At the moment my body clock is ticking away just fine. Besides, its not as if we have to work till 6pm. As long as I get my beauty sleep in I don't mind.

Fracture - *Nij, you have been playing a few solo acoustic shows of late - how'd that come about?*

Nij - I'm glad I started doing the acoustic gigs. I'd like to do more of them. It is nerve-wracking but its something I've always wanted to do. I got by with a few JD's on that first show! It's a tense half hour to be up there by myself, knowing I can't make a mistake. At least with the other two up there I could get away with it! I'd like to see more bands do acoustic gigs, its enjoyable.

Fracture - *You do have a unique way of playing guitar, not just because you're left handed, but the chord formations and progressions. How did you learn to play that way?*

Nij - I taught myself to play guitar when I was about 13. I was listening to all sorts of stuff at the time like BIG COUNTRY, THE JAM, THE MISSION, THE RUTS and THE CULT. I think its essential to be interested in different types of music from the beginning. I've never analysed the way I play or write but I do know what I like and don't like. Since I started learning the guitar I have never been that fussed with 'standard chords'. I find them boring to play, besides, there's so much more you can do. Most of what I play is made up of open string chords and lead bits. You can come up with so much melody playing music, it's just a matter of having an ear for it I suppose.

Fracture - *I know Lloyd is a big BROMLEY FC fan... I've seen him in action on the terraces before! Do you share his love for the game? What interests do you have outside of the band?*

Marc - I've been to see a few Bromley games with Lloyd, I used to live and love football as a kid and that sort of changed when I found music, girls and beer. Up until the age of thirteen I was in the school team and I can still remember the names of all the Liverpool players from when Bob Paisley was manager. I wish I still had my Liverpool kit, how retro would that look! Now I love going to see bands play, having drinks with friends, the whole gig experience really. I just recently bought a new flat so my partner Kerry seems to think one of my new interests should be DIY, the home improvement kind, we'll see. I do love making things out of wood, I trained as a cabinet maker for eight years and still knock stuff up now and again, I made my cousin a kitchen out of old joists, floor boards and with old school gym flooring as surfaces, sounds shit but it did look very nice when I'd finished.

Fracture - *Lloyd, now you're selling up and moving away from London very soon... what has brought this decision on?*

Lloyd - It's been a long term thought process which seriously threatened to spiral beyond my control. I bought a property five years ago as my partner was pregnant with our first child. I bought it near to where her parents lived so she could have some support from them. I totally bought into that whole family responsibility thing, and was happy to tie myself to the career / mortgage drudgery which was mapped out before me because I loved them and was going to be the best father I could be. Our daughter Phoebe was born and just after New Year 2002 my partner said she was unhappy and was going to leave. Our relationship had broken down to a degree and, whilst upsetting, I could accept that. But she was taking my daughter, and there was nothing I could (or can) do about it. The most precious thing in my life was going to be taken out of it. I cannot begin to explain what that feels like, what emotions that stirs. So I was left living in a place which held memories of my daughter, close to none of my friends, tied to a mortgage and a job which I'd needed to provide a home for us. From that point on, it was never my "home", just a place I kept my stuff and slept.

“...this is what I do, this is who I am. I’m thirty four years old now, been doing this for seventeen years, and it still makes me feel alive. It really is the rock on which I lean, as are all the wonderful friends I have within this community.

I stayed out late after work purposely so that I would not have to spend any more time there than I had to. However, I did get to see my daughter at weekends so it was important I had somewhere for her to come, close to where she was living. That was the sparkle in my otherwise dismal existence. But there was a spiral there - spending the week hating living that way, hating working, hating continuing the life which I’d set up for the good of my family, which had been ripped away. There was anger there too at my situation, but was constantly repressed as to spill over might jeopardise my relationship with Phoebe’s mother, and subsequently Phoebe. I felt like I had to be subservient to ensure that I would continue to see and be a part of Phoebe’s life. The weekends with her were great, then she’d have to go home and I had to watch her leaving from the same window which I’d seen her leave the first time. The whole week I’d be trying to think of ways to change my life, get myself back, be happy with myself... but I couldn’t see any way out of my situation. The feelings of helplessness increased, I started getting concerned my misery was visible to my daughter. Something had to give. I was having a relationship with someone, which I’d have liked to have continued - but it wasn’t to be. On the outside I was pretty relaxed about it, because the whole situation (for her) was extremely complicated and she had to make a decision, which I understood. But I think that was the straw that broke the camel’s back... whilst minor in itself, in the grand scheme of life, I think when it was coupled with everything else going on, it just got too much. One weekday morning last summer I lay in bed and literally could not get out of bed. There was no motivation left to do anything. I simply lay there, unable to move. I’d slept less than three hours a day for weeks, my mind just spinning, unable to rest. I’d stopped eating for long periods too. Eventually I walked out the door, onto the bus and to the doctors. What I was going to say I didn’t know - I didn’t know what the fuck was going on, just that my body was giving up and suddenly everything had ground to a halt in my head. She listened to what I said and diagnosed me with clinical depression. That was the day the light at the end of the tunnel appeared for the first time. It was only a speck then, but before there was only darkness. It may sound melodramatic to some people but those who know me realise how real this must have been, and how I changed. I had a month signed off from work. I had anti-depressants, but never took them. The best thing the doctor did was say that I should concentrate solely on the good aspects of my life, the things that make me happy. In time, the rest will sort itself out. So I took that advice to heart, and sought to fill my life with the things that make me happy, what fuels my engine. BLOCKO had a tour planned with STRIKE ANYWHERE which was extremely exciting and took a lot of preparation, so I immersed myself in that. The tour itself was amazing, making new friends and having an incredible time. That certainly helped pick me up and I was able to tackle my questions again and try to find solutions. So since the end of last summer, I’ve been thinking of ways and schemes to change my life, whilst enhancing all the good in it. The money aspect (I get paid pretty well) held me back for a while, but once I got beyond money as an issue, that was it. I looked at finishing just before Christmas, and handed in my notice. As it happens, STRIKE ANYWHERE are back on tour in Europe in November and they wanted me to work for them so I’ve brought forward my leaving plans and finish work on November 14th. Every day I smile just a little bit more.

FRACTURE - *Do you have a plan... is this like a kind of year out scenario?*

Lloyd - My only plan is to have no plans that can’t be changed. I just want the flexibility of being able to do as little or as much as I want, and the equity which I will realise after the sale of my flat (which was fortunately bought solely in my name) will allow me to do that. As it happened, the thing which seemed like a prison to me was actually my key out of that place. I’m looking at 12-18 months of just nothing. Taking time out of life, getting that sparkle back. Fortunately too I discussed all this with Phoebe’s mother who is very supportive and will allow me to see her for the school holidays and whenever else I may arrangements with her. Again, I have been relatively fortunate that we both have our daughter’s best interests at heart, and that as her father I am extremely important to Phoebe and will remain an integral part of her life. So I’m going to move the few possessions of any value I have to my parent’s home in Devon where I have a little room (with a PC), and just kick back. I’m already enlisted in the town football team and the pub skittles and boules team, so that’ll be fun. Aside from that I want to go and visit my friends on the East and West Coasts of the States, maybe Iceland too as I’ve always wanted to go there, and try and sort a few BLOCKO tours too. Maybe in the summer I’ll rent somewhere for me and Phoebe to stay. The main thing is having no work / time constraints or financial worries I’m pretty much free to do what I want, however much or little that may be. No doubt my London / Leeds based friends might be asked if there’s room on their sofas from time to time too!

Fracture - *How will this affect BLOCKO?*

Lloyd - An interesting question, and one a few people have asked. Personally I think it’ll be great. I hope that we’ll get to do rehearsals more often and for longer. I mean we’re pretty slack really. Two hours a week, 4-6pm isn’t pushing us too much. As Mates and Nij are posties, I hope we’ll be able to do a few more longer afternoon sessions. So hopefully this’ll mean more songs written, learned quicker. As for gigs, well, maybe one-offs in London might be a little more difficult, but otherwise we’ll probably get to plan a few

more things and continue to get out as much as we do presently. If Nij and Mates can co-ordinate their leave we'll have the opportunity maybe to do some mini tours. The band certainly helped me get through last year, and I have no intention of letting it go. Yes, things will change, but with the increased flexibility I have, we just need to manage it to our mutual advantage. I'm looking forward to it - a new lease of life for me personally and for the band.

Fracture - *You have a beautiful little daughter, it must be difficult trying to give her the attention and time she / you deserve. How do you balance being a punk rock celebrity and being a father?*

Lloyd - Before our break-up, I was happy going home at night to be with my little girl and my girlfriend. I loved being around them, being part of that whole family unit. However, I still got out for band practice, doing gigs, seeing bands - even went off for a couple of weeks to see HOT WATER MUSIC. Since then, and particularly after the events of last summer, that was, and remains, important to me - as I said to someone last night after blasting the new STRIKE ANYWHERE through my headphones on the bus home, this is what I do, this is who I am. I'm thirty four years old now, been doing this for seventeen years, and it still makes me feel alive. It really is the rock on which I lean, as are all the wonderful friends I have within that community. Records, bands, songs can all reflect an element of who I am, can trigger a mood or convey a feeling. I guess I felt, and always have, that unless the fire is burning brightly inside of me, I'm not being much of a father to my daughter. It is an integral part of my life, and it is only right (to me) that that reflects in the way I am as a father. If I'm not happy with myself, I'm not being much good to my daughter. I think earlier I mentioned that I started to get concerned that my daughter could sense my sadness... I want her to sense my happiness. Again, it's all about being the best father that I can. I do have to strike a balance between seeing her and doing band things. We try not to play every weekend simply because I need that time with her, just me and her. But then I also need some weekends out with BLOCKO making sure that I keep myself real. It is hard sometimes but hopefully now I'm managing it. I think I realised that the whole weekend / work / weekend cycle left no time for me, and I know that that was one of the most important things I needed to put right before I could sort anything else out. Phoebe though is the most special thing that will ever be in my life. I am in awe of her and her ways, and the effect she has on me is astounding.

Fracture - *You gonna move back to London at some point or do you think you've served your time in the capital?*

Lloyd - I don't know to be honest. As I said, my plans don't extend that far. I think I'll always be a south London boy at heart - Croydon born and bred for my sins. Sadly the whole cost of living in and around London make it less and less appealing to actually live here - I actually think it'll be much nicer to live within striking distance, without the cost and grief that London living can serve up. Taking almost two hours to get from Waterloo to my home in Caterham with a train full of commuters I won't miss. I don't know though. I like to travel around the country and have met any number of new friends in some wonderful places. Whereas Marc moved from the Isle of Wight to London, the reverse effect may be happening to me - a desire to move out. We'll see.

Fracture - *Oscar Wilde once said "Once you are bored of London you are bored of life" - a quote that I always believed in. But for me personally, things got on top of me and I just found it a claustrophobic place to try and deal with internal problems. Sometimes it's just too much... the day to day routines become hassles, peace is hard to find and you never seem to have time for yourself. Does that ring true for you?*

Lloyd - Yes, certainly. Having answered these questions one by one, I think that London itself was part of the reason - I guess I wasn't happy with the day-to-day routines and hassles, yet I couldn't find any peace at home because my head was just running out of control. The first thing I did when I was signed off for four weeks was went to Devon to stay with my parents and sat in a beach hut with my grandmother for a couple of afternoons, just doing nothing. My head was much easier to clear. I guess I'm looking to be able to have that same sort of peace of mind whenever I want it in the next few months, and that has affected my decision.

Fracture - *What does the future hold for BLOCKO? You getting your asses to Japan then?*

Marc - Our first full length album should be out by the time this goes to print so it'll be great to finally get it in our hands and see what people make of it. Hopefully we will get to go to Japan in 2004, it's been a goal on mine for a while now and just recently all the pieces are falling into place - we have a friend out there that can help us sort out a tour so it's just getting the time off work and paying for the flights, to be honest I can't wait, it's really exciting.

Lloyd - Yeah, just talking about this recently. When I EXCUSE were over, Marc asked Yoichi about whether we might get to tour there. He said we just need to work out when we can get the time off, the cheap flights, and let him know - he'll sort it out for us. As the album is due now, that'll be amazing - certainly one of the things we as a band would never have thought possible when we started, and certainly a dream coming true. So hopefully before Easter we'll have gotten ourselves over there and played and added another incredible experience to the list.

Fracture - *Anything you wanna add?*

Marc - Punk rock has helped me go to many different places I never would have been to and meet so many wonderful people. I'd really like to thank all the people that have ever helped us out in whatever way be it big or small, it's all appreciated. Long live the IPF!

Lloyd - Obviously we can't ever have done these things without the love and support of so many of our friends and family... too many to list, all loved equally. For me personally, I would like to express in print that I love my daughter more than anything in the world, even when she *"boots me in the winkle"*. Our full length should be out by the time this goes to print. Get it from Aston at Boss Tuneage, from us direct, or (I guess) in the shops as it's distributed by Shellshock. If you do buy it, thanks... we hope you'll enjoy it. If you've read this, thanks for taking the time, and hope it's been of interest. Thanks to you DS, for doing the interview and being a friend for many years, and to Monk Dave for his assistance with the artwork on our record. For news on BLOCKO, or to find out what else we may have for sale please visit our website or feel free to email me at bass_loser@yahoo.com

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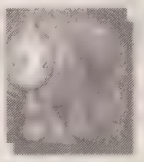

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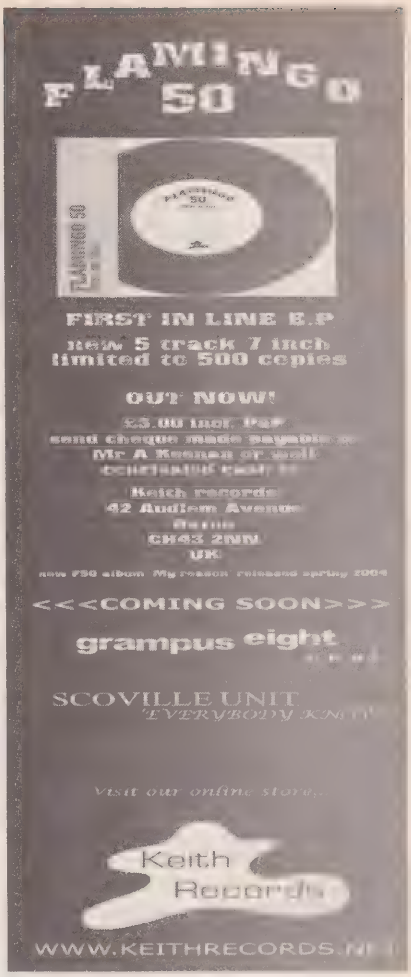

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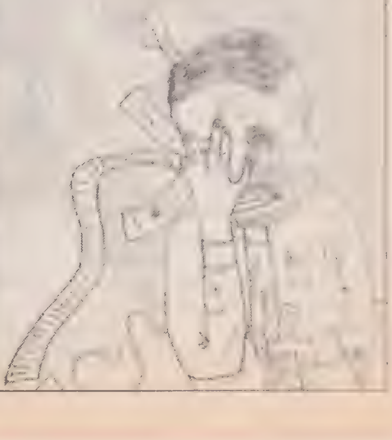

IS HARDCORE GIVING US SOMETHING MORE THAN FOUR CHORDS AND AN UPBEAT RHYTHM?

by Dario Adamic

There's a tiny light in the room that you can barely see your fingers going up and down the bass guitar neck, let alone manage to recognize the faces that stare at you a few meters away. You know they're all there, by the outlines you see when forcing to look in their direction, but the fact you can't see the expression on their faces scares you a little. The drummer hits the snare, bass and cymbal contemporarily, the music stops, and you hear people applauding, which probably means they liked the music. Someone even calls you from the dark, but even though you know it's someone of your friends, you can't guess which one it is. But you feel satisfied. Now you know the music you play appeals to these people, and it's already something.

So you think to express your views now, in between the songs, as you know how hard it is to understand any of the lyrics from the pit if you have no releases out to make them familiar to the audience. The next song is very important to you. It speaks about the nature; about what the human race has done to it and what can be done to save what's left to be saved. It's important for you to spit these words out. It's important to warn the people and take a stand. At the end, that's why you consider yourself HardCore; it's surely not for the amount of records you listen to. These words could go with any music and it'd still be HardCore. It's not how fast you can play, it's not how high you can jump, and it's not how many tattoos you have all over your body. Without trying to define it, you know HardCore always meant a positive way of thinking to yourself. Care, respect, tolerance, solidarity, love. There are so many words you can associate with it and there are so many things HardCore has given to you. So you express your thoughts and try to explain what's behind the song you'll be playing next, but it only takes a minute to realize your words aren't falling on the fertile ground. Somebody leaves to take a drink at the bar, somebody else starts chatting with friends, and somebody shouts: "Shut up! Play!". At the end of your attempt at a speech, far fewer people applaud than at the end of each of your songs, but you aren't surprised as you expected something like that. At least you know that somebody listened to your words and, well, again it's an accomplishment. After all, most of the people are here to have a good time and for most of them HardCore is only music, not an ideology or a lifestyle. With different clothes on, you could easily imagine them at a Rolling Stones or Ace Of Base concert. Yes, it becomes a challenge, but nothing is easy in life. The harder it is, the more you appreciate it. After all, when you first got into all this, it was because of music. Ideas came later, and ideas kept you where you are right now. It's worth a try.

The above is a true story. It happened several times when I was playing in a band, and who knows how many times it happened to other bands worldwide. Unless you say a slogan that's easy to identify with and shout, you better don't speak at gigs. Tell me if I'm wrong, but to me gigs seem to be a 'no thinking zone' where everybody just go to entertain themselves. But it's not gigs that I wanted to speak about here. It's the nature. The nature that surrounds and feeds us.

You might think it's a phony thing to write about. After all, you've heard so many times people speaking of an apparent dying of the nature, but you're in your twenties and you're still alive and even if you try to look back in the past, nothing has really changed about the nature. The summer is still hot, the winter is cold, and that park you like to go to is still there, as it always has been. So what the fuck are these people talking about?

Yeah right, that's all true, but it's the same for a short-sighted person. He can see well the things close to him, but what about the rest? Unfortunately, we might not be able to notice changes on our immediate surroundings, but it still says nothing on the global changes. It'd be ridiculous to try to condense years of studies into a paragraph, but trying to be more concrete, do terms like 'the greenhouse effect', 'the hole in the ozone-layer', or 'acid rains' tell you something?

The higher temperatures on Earth, as well as increasing of sea level and rainfalls, are all amongst the consequences of the 'greenhouse effect', and they started or are expected to start showing their impact on the nature. The hole in the ozone layer, partially tied to the causes of the 'greenhouse effect', is created by gases better known as CFC's (Chlorofluorocarbons) whose the most common use was spray cans (deodorants, paint sprays.). This hole allows the harmful UV radiation, originating from the sun, to arrive to the biosphere instead of being filtered by ozone. The skin cancer seems to be the main consequence of the UV radiation. Acid rains consist of the dangerous discharge gases which first go up in the air but then come down with the rain and literally destroy the forests as well as affect the yield, buildings, and human health. These are just some of the unpopular examples showing how the human activity has altered the natural balance (of course, in a negative direction) let alone the ones we need no scientific introduction to foresee the effects of (overproduction, non recyclable packages, destruction of forests, pollution...). And what about oil / coal / gas deposits; do you think they'll last forever?

Well, obviously, even though it's hard to notice it with bare eyes, the fate of the nature is going pretty much downhill. As you have probably realized by now, the one and only responsible party is the human race, so it comes naturally to think that it's also the only party to be able to repair what's possible to be repaired. Sure, we can't get back thousands of animal and vegetable species extinguished because of the man and its creations, but there's still much we can do.

The first thing is people have this wrong idea of what ecology is and how to put our intentions into practice. Most people think that ecology could be practiced only by joining Greenpeace, WWF, Sea Shepherds, or any of such organizations. Even worse, many of them think ecology is practiced only by these organizations, so they limit their involvement to subscriptions or donations. Confusing conscience with money is like going to church and pretending all the sins will be forgiven after praying a couple of prayers, so you can make your sins again knowing you can always return to the church on a Sunday morning and everything's going to be alright.

If your idea of ecology is the same as one of the above two, let me prove you wrong. I mean, joining and/or supporting organizations that care about the nature is great, no doubt about that, but what should be our primary involvement with ecology is far closer than that. It needs no organizations, no hierarchy, no leaders to tell you what to do; it needs yourself only. There's a million little things that could be done in our simple everyday life that it's unbelievable. It takes no brains to figure them out, but in most cases our human nature made us too lazy to think, let alone to act by ourselves.

It'd take a book to write down all the techniques and strategies of what I call 'the first step ecology', so let's rather concentrate on one of its aspects which should give you an idea on what it's all about.

In my eyes, the most important, as well as the most familiar, problem is waste. When I say waste, I mean both the waste we produce by consumption as well as wasting natural resources such as oil, coal, wood,. Very often the two are interconnected, as we use these resources both to create energy as well as to create products we use in our everyday life, so I won't separate the two. Anyway, these actions are so simple and so obvious, and it takes a little or no effort to put them into practice. So, let's see what we can do.

First of all, we can diminish the waste by consuming only what we really need as opposed to what we're told we need. Sure, it's totally opposite of how 99% of the wealthy people live and how this world has been set up for the last century (at least) but instead of just singing the songs on how you hate the system and all that jazz, here's a possibility to put your actions where your mouth is.

> When going shopping, we surely don't need to buy/take plastic bags from the store. Think of it beforehand, and you'll certainly find some plastic bags at home that you could reuse or, even better, take a cloth or string bag that you saw your mother going to the supermarket with. The impact on your wallet might not be that amazing (the bags are either extra-cheap or free) but the impact on the environment is.

> There's a whole bunch of products we sometimes use because of laziness or simplicity but most of the times a cotton handkerchief is more handy that the paper ones, plus you don't have to strike down a tree to produce it and you can reuse it for years. The same goes for cloth rags against paper towels. Better use washable plates instead of paper ones, glass cups instead of plastic cups. You'll save money and you'll create less garbage that fills containers (and accidentally the streets).

> We don't need to kill a tree to have a traditional Christmas/New Year's Eve holiday. Think of millions of trees that are struck down worldwide in December, only to last a couple of weeks in our houses and then be thrown away. Isn't it too high of a price to be paid for such a thing? You can buy a synthetic tree that will last for years, or you can plant a tree yourself and have your own living tree for holidays (and afterwards, of course). Again, you saved money aside doing the right thing for the environment.We can reduce the waste by selecting products we buy. Packaging costs us 1/10 of the price we pay for a product, as well as makes up 1/2 of our total waste. There are alternatives to avoid/reduce the unnecessary packaging.

> When you buy a 2 litre Coke (or any other less corporate beverage, for that matter) you sure have saved on packaging rather than buying four 1/2 litre bottles, let alone the fact that you have saved money as well. There will be situations where you can't apply this (you're just about to buy yourself a drink down the street and you surely won't buy 2 litres for your thirst) but whenever you're shopping for your household needs, it just doesn't make sense to fill your fridge with small bottles or cans. The same applies to any food that lasts and could be bought in bulk (pasta, biscuits, rice.) as well as to articles of daily use such as laundry soap, cleaners, etc.

> You can avoid the extra packaging when buying fruits and vegetables at market. You could use your own bag or at most you might need an extra paper bag which is both recyclable and bio-degradable. Supermarkets pack fruit and vegetables in styrofoam containers which besides being an extra waste will also never degrade. Again, market usually offers competitive prices and a wider selection.

There are different ways of saving 'energy'. We call it energy for convenience, but in effect we're saving on the non-renewable earth's raw materials such as coal, oil and gas. They're not exactly non-renewable, but these resources take thousands of years (more for coal and oil, less for gas) for their creation so we consider them non-renewable as they can't be regained in a short run. Their consuming also creates toxic fumes, so it becomes also a matter of pollution amongst all the rest. The only energy that is free, inexhaustible and has no negative impact on the nature is the solar energy, so putting an emphasis on the use of solar energy is a huge plus.

> In most situations, there's an alternative to using the car for your own transportation. If your job/school/university is far from home, how about using the bus, or even better (valid for bigger cities only) the subway. If the bus stop or subway station isn't so close to where you live, you can drive there and then park your car and continue by public transportation. If such a possibility doesn't exist, how about picking up your colleagues/friends and driving together? After all, you have the advantage of being able to use carpool and saving money on gas and tolls. Driving a car alone is such a waste and a such a big problem pollution and traffic wise, so please consider alternatives seriously. For short distances, a bike could be an alternative, especially in plain cities and places with no much rain over the course of a year. If, at the top of it, all you have to carry with yourself could be packed in your backpack, wait no more and get yourself a bike!

> Use fluorescent bulbs as opposed to the ordinary ones. They use less wattage to create the same brightness as well as last longer, so you both save energy and money.

> Whenever possible, buy products made of recycled paper as opposed to a virgin one. There's a whole lot of them around: tissues, toilet paper, note books, envelopes,. Some copy stores carry the recycled paper, but you have to request to have your copies made on it, otherwise they'll use the ordinary paper. As you all probably know, paper is made from wood and therefore the use of recycled paper reduces the amount of trees to be struck down. However, give preference to unbleached recycled paper as it doesn't need toxic substances for its production. Also, to support the recycling industry, you should collect the unnecessary paper you have lying at home (magazines, newspapers, paper/cardboard packaging, etc.) and bring it to the paper recycling containers (in Italy they're white, but their colour varies from country to country). If you have some used paper at home that you don't need (university/school books that you copied or anything else for that matter) you can use the other side of sheet for your notes, writings,. It's important to use both sides of paper whenever possible. When copying books, copy on both sides rather than on one only.

> Talking of recycling, remember that there are different other materials that can be recycled, like aluminium (beverage cans) and glass (bottles and other glass containers). By recycling these, we save on raw material, on energy used in the process, and we diminish the amount of garbage thrown away which is slowly reducing our own living space.

> A good idea also is to flatten all the packaging possible before throwing it away. By flattening a milk carton or a can of soda we reduce the space occupied by itself for approximately 3/4. Not all packaging is possible to be flatten up however, but by doing it regularly on the ones that can be we create less demand for garbage containers (it means getting rid of up to a half of all the garbage containers that populate the streets) and create more space for ourselves.

> Don't even think of throwing away your old clothes. If they're really worn out, you could always use them as rags for cleaning your household. If you've just outgrown them or don't like them anymore, donate them to people who might need them, give them away to organizations that collect used clothes (in Italy it's done by several associations) or sell cheaply/donate them to thrift stores (try Salvation Army or any other thrift store in the area). Even if someone makes a little money off it, at least you know that other people will wear those clothes and they won't be completely wasted as if you threw them in the dustbin.

> Use rechargeable batteries as opposed to ordinary ones. You don't save energy this way but you save on raw materials used in production of batteries as well as reduce the amount of (toxic) garbage around.

As you can see, there are lots of ways to do something for the nature and, believe me, there are many more. All it takes to find them out is a little reasoning over things we do; a common sense, nothing else. Once we realize what could be done, it takes us almost no effort to put these things into practice. Fight your mental and physical laziness and you'll find yourself doing these things as naturally as walking or breathing.

The above are facts. It's not distorted truth, and it's not just a one-way outlook on certain situations. If we care about this planet, it will feed us and provide a pleasant place to live for us all and many generations to come. If we treat it like there's no tomorrow, we're destroying the future of our children as well as our own.

Myself, even though I was always the kind of a kid who wouldn't litter the streets, I needed an initial impulse and a little knowledge about things. I read the books, watched my friends doing things I haven't thought of before, asked here and there, and I just found myself giving more and more importance to things I could do for the nature. The biggest impact, however, had the articles I used to read in Slug & Lettuce fanzine over a decade ago, and which served as a source of a lot of the above info. About ten years ago Slug & Lettuce stopped this section, but a handful of issues that I had already read made their impact on me.

It's important to pass this information around: to your parents, friends, relatives, colleagues. Don't force it to anyone because it's a personal choice, but passing the info around will make people aware of things they weren't aware of before. At that point, it's up to them to adopt these things or not. I doubt all the people have the sensitivity for such a topic, but even if only the economic benefits turn them into doing the right thing, it's still an accomplishment. That's why I stress where an eco tip is also a money saving tip; many people unfortunately live only by "money makes the world go round" saying.

Now read the first few lines of this article again and tell me: "Is HardCore dead or what?". But that's, I guess, another story

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THEY COME TO CONQUER THE WORLD...
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YOU CAN SEE IT...
...IN THE EYES OF THE CHILDREN!
CERT. X1

FOUR LETTER WORD are from Cardiff, UK. Not only are they one of the most cursed bands in the UK, they're also one of the best. They play straight up punk *fucking* rock, drawing on a ton of influences from both the UK and abroad, but they're also impossible to pigeon-hole. They're no Holidays in The Sun retro piece of shit, nor are they Epi-Fat emulators. This is a band with its own unique sound, something that is incredibly rare nowadays, and plus they have had so many problems in their 12 year history it's a wonder they're still around - but thankfully they are... With two albums down and a load of singles, compilation tracks and demo's behind them, FOUR LETTER WORD are back after an 18 month hiatus, and are tighter than ever before, so for the last ever issue of Fracture, it was only right to include them - yet another great local band that have never had the respect and interest that they truly deserved.

Interview and photo's by Monk Dave.

Fracture - *Obviously you've done a lot of interviews, there's going to be people that know FOUR LETTER WORD and all the other stuff you do - but for those that don't, please give an informative and complete history of the band from it's early days to where you are right now. Things seem to be going better than they have done for a long time... what happened? How have things changed over those 10+ years, in terms of being in a D.I.Y. UK punk band?*

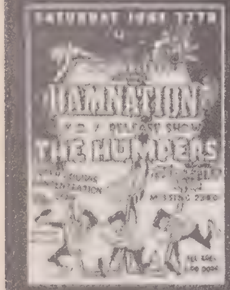
Welly - Well, I never thought we'd get an interview in here. I guess it's pretty fitting for a band like us to get on the sinking ship while all the other rats are leaving huh? Ha ha! You want a band history? Go and have a look at our fuk'n website, it's all on there - hey hey! Ahem, I won't go into exhaustive detail because "can you hear the sound, of five thousand pages, turning in the depths of hell?" We formed in the summer of 1991. I'd been itching to do a band for years, but everyone I knew was already in one, so when Kip (our first drummer) got booted from THE COWBOY KILLERS that was the beginning. We enlisted Chris on bass, and Jake on guitar. Jon Butler joined on guitar later in the year. We did one gig with this line-up before Jake finished college and moved to London in 1992, leaving us as a four piece. We recorded our first demo at the end of 1992, which we released as the 6 song 'Eden' cassette. It was total over the top rockin' melodic stuff, and listening to it now, you can hear what it was like trying to forge a sound in the Punk Rock vacuum that existed in the early nineties. Another dire unreleased demo was recorded at the end of 1993. Chris left in the spring of 1994 to be replaced by Dog on bass. We wrote some new stuff and recorded the 6 song 'Burning a Better Britain' demo in the spring of 1995. Andy of J.S.N.T.G.M. picked up on it and we split the finance to release 500 7" EP's with four of those songs and called it 'Words That Burn'. We toured on this EP with SPITE from Bristol in the spring of 1996 before Dog departed and along came Hairy on bass. Kip was ousted from the drum stool at the end of 1996 (and went onto IN THE SHIT and DA CAPO) to be replaced by Will, leaving Jon and myself as the only two originals. Not long after, we signed with B.Y.O. Records, and after a rough demo, recorded our first album in the summer of 1997 with Frankie Stubbs. The 13 song 'A Nasty Piece of Work' was released on LP, CD and cassette in early 1998, and a 7" from that; 'Do You Feel Lucky, Punk?' came out in the spring for our two month U.S. and Canadian tour in the summer. After the tour, Hairy was ousted and Will's pal Tim took his place. We wrote and gigged some more and recorded our second album in the spring of 1999, and the twelve-song 'Zero Visibility (Experiments with Truth)' came out in the late summer. Not long after, B.Y.O. told us they'd had a letter from someone claiming Trade Mark ownership of our name, but said they'd ignore it and hopefully it would go away. So we kind of laughed it off, as they were the bosses, and they didn't seem too concerned. At this point Tim and Will quit the band causing us to cancel a European tour (Will went on to THE TAKE), and I knew what was coming next: we got dropped from B.Y.O. It took a while but we

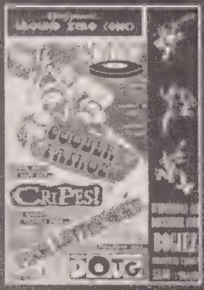
FOUR LETTER WORD

enlisted Tom on Bass from ASPIRIN KID and Wedge from RECTIFY on drums. Then Jon left after nine years, seeing Neil formerly of SHUTDOWN come in on guitar. By this time I was in the thick of reading up on trademark law and trying to protect the name here in the U.K. (even though the boy band already had TM's in both the U.S. and U.K.) We recorded 6 songs at the end of 2000, thanks mainly to the kindness of Ian Glasper of STAMPIN' GROUND, from which one track went to his 'Barricades and Broken Dreams' CONFLICT tribute on 'Blackfish', and the other five became our 'Cold Day in Hell' CDEP that came out on the label of our staunch supporters 'Suspect Device' fanzine. We got talking to Andy at J.S.N.T.G.M. again and he decided to release our first EP with the extra tracks from the session. We got it remastered, and he recorded a spoken word track about the state of music, and it all came out on a green 12" Mini-LP called 'The Band That Time Forgot'. We did a little tour of the U.K. to raise some legal funds, and thanks to some really generous bands and individuals (Cov John and Punky Steve spring to mind), we raised £500. Which we spent on a couple of legal letters and a U.K. Trade Mark for 'Live Performance' (the only aspect of the marketplace the boy band company somehow overlooked). Soon after Neil staggered out of the band and Tom enlisted his pal Matt. With Matt, we wrote an album's worth of material, so I hunted around for about 18 months to try and find someone willing to pay recording costs (because obviously we're skint and every penny we get gets saved to hopefully pay off B.Y.O. records). We couldn't find anyone willing to take a risk on a penniless legal liability, and after all this waiting Wedge left and then Tom, basically because they were sick of nothing happening. It took a year to find another drummer (they're a rare breed as you're probably aware), but finally, we found Jon Swain, and the original bassist Chris came back. This forms the current line-up of Jon, Chris, Matt and myself on drums, bass, guitar and vocals respectively. Original guitarist Jon came back for one practice too, but disappeared again. He'd still like to do it, but he's really busy with work commitments. Yes, things are going very well at the moment, but I'm sure you can empathise with why I'm not going to make any grand proclamations or plans for the future. I don't take anything for granted. As to what has changed; well, it's a different world out there now from say 1991. It's an unrecognisable landscape. In regards to being a D.I.Y. U.K. Punk band; not a lot has changed. You still get to be unpaid and ignored for your efforts.

Fracture - *Most of your recorded output has come out on L.A. label B.Y.O. - how did this come about, and why did it eventually all go horrendously pear-shaped? How does it make you feel when you see people from that label talk about FOUR LETTER WORD in interviews, in a negative light?*

Welly - I'd been heavily into that label's output since the early eighties, and had been in touch with Shawn Stern since the late eighties after doing a mail interview for the zine. When we did our first EP, the thought of sending it to labels didn't even cross our minds, because there were very few labels then in comparison to now, and words like 'record deal' weren't even in our vocabulary. Nearly a year after it came out, I thought I'd send a copy to Shawn to see what he thought of our little band. A while later I got a letter from a guy who was working at B.Y.O. called John, asking us if we wanted to put something out on his label 'Devil Doll'. Before I could reply, I got a phone call off Shawn Stern asking us if we wanted to work with them instead. It was the last thing I expected, although I always wondered if it hadn't been for the interest from John of 'Devil Doll', whether we'd have heard anything at all. So the next step was to try to make sense of the big contract. It was a tough task, so we got a lawyer free through the Musicians Union to read it, but when he suggested some alterations, Shawn just basically said 'don't let this be a deal buster', so we figured that we weren't really going to get another chance like that after six years in one-horse Wales, and signed it. It all went 'pear-shaped' as





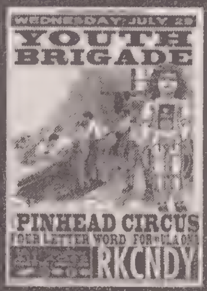
you say because we cancelled a tour. I don't think they realised how hard it is to sell music by British bands in the present day, and we were having perpetual line-up problems. We obviously started to look like a financial albatross, so when the letters from the boy band company lawyers came in, they just figured it was time to cut their losses I guess. Yeah, I find it pretty insulting that he feels the need to badmouth me and tell outright lies. I don't know why that is. If you don't mind, I'd like you to re-print part of an interview question I stumbled across with Shawn Stern from the 'Deepfrybonanza' website so I can comment on the kind of stuff that's being written about me;

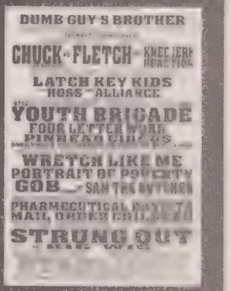
Shawn Stern - "We were about to drop them from their contract with BYO about a year and a half ago when some asshole sued us saying he had a copyright on the name Four Letter Word. Since we weren't selling any records and about to drop the band, we managed to get out of any legal problems and possible monetary loss by agreeing not to sell the records or merchandise. Welly has been fighting to copyright the name in the UK, he seemed pretty adamant about it which I can understand but considering the little serious touring they've done, it seems a bit pointless to me, but I co-operated with him and gave him any info and letters I received from the lawsuit. And I offered to send him a bunch of the records and merchandise we had on our floor at a very reduced cost and on consignment, with the understanding that he would pay us as he sold it. He thought I should just "give it" to him because the settlement in the lawsuit stated that we would destroy or deliver the remaining stock to this copyright owner. I told Welly that by sending any of this to him I could be in breech (sic) of the settlement agreement and I was taking a big risk to help him, but he thought it was just a joke. I got pretty pissed at this, cause we'd lost a lot of money on releasing his records and advancing them stock and money to do their U.S. tour. Needless to say, he's not sent me a penny for the stock I sent him over a year ago. I'm sure he's sold some of it, but he's conveniently neglected to stay in contact with us. So, yeah, we're pretty disappointed in him."

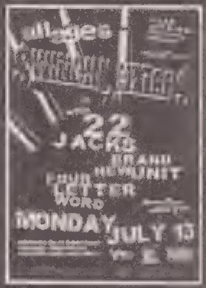
I'm glad he finally admitted why they dropped us because that was the first time I've seen it in those terms. It used to be that it was because of the boy band. Firstly, they never got sued, they got threatened, there is a difference. Secondly, it wasn't copyright, it was Trade Mark. There are three separate categories to intellectual property rights; Trade Mark, Copyright and Patent, they are all distinct and different. Thirdly, when I got the U.K. Trade Mark for 'live performance', I contacted Shawn and asked to see all documentation they had on the case, but he refused, saying that the opposing lawyers must have 'got bored' (wow, good lawyers, they were working for some ropey outfit called 'Universal' too - ?!) and that they didn't want to dredge it all up again because nothing had actually been signed after all (this was a while after), and all our stuff remained in the B.Y.O. warehouse, and all our stuff remains available from distributors in the U.K. and U.S. to this day. So no, he didn't show me anything. The only thing I've ever seen pertaining to the case is a fax of the second 'cease and desist' letter from the opposing TM lawyers. When they offered us the final shipment of stuff before it was to be 'destroyed', I did ask if we could have it any cheaper, thinking that cost price from us for example was better than nothing from the opposing side. I NEVER asked for anything for free. He hit the roof, and refused to go any lower than the standard wholesale price, insisting (as he always did) that I found it all hilarious and I was being constantly sarcastic, of which I never had any idea of what the hell he was talking about, but I guess it just suited his 'argument'. They told me I would have five years to pay off the outstanding balance of $1900, I had no idea I was paying it off in instalments. Now he's inferring I'm a rip-off? Every penny I get from the band and zine has been saved since I received the stuff in the hope that I can pay them off as soon as I can (I'm not there yet). Things have been a little tough for gigging to sell their product of recent times. In the last three years since we parted company with that label, we've gone through four band members, I've had three deaths in the family and I've got two young children to think about. I'm really sorry that I've not been able to pay them off yet, but I will. I will need a few things from them too though. I'll need the delivery note/invoice for the final shipment because there wasn't one (I know this because I keep everything), and I'll need a receipt for my payment when they receive it. I'm sure everyone can understand why I have no desire to 'stay in contact' unless it is purely to finalise financial matters. Buy Your Own records indeed. Oh, and in the following question in that interview, he takes credit for signing LEATHERFACE. That's pretty funny. Next time you see Mr. Stubbs, ask him who spent a considerable amount of time asking and convincing him it was a good idea. You think you're doing a label a favour, and look how you get rewarded...

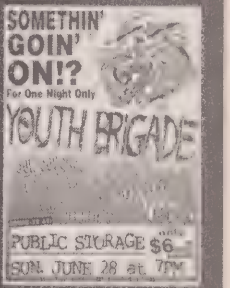
Fracture - *Seeing as the band has been around for maybe a lot longer than people realise, you have actually played a fair number of gigs both here and abroad, specifically a large U.S. tour back in the summer of 1998 - how was that for you? I know there was some "problems" on that tour, do you just totally fucking hate America now? Was "The Curse of The Word" already in existence before then?*

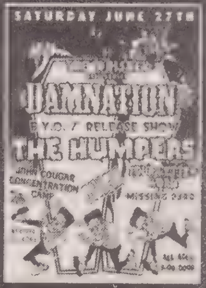
Welly - Argh, you mentioned it. It's like the 'Scottish Play' - we're not allowed to even utter it's name. I always put 'that to which you refer' down to me writing the song 'Fundamentally Flawed', I think that's where it started. Ah, the U.S. and Canadian tour was great. That's one part of the sorry episode I wouldn't change. Good days,

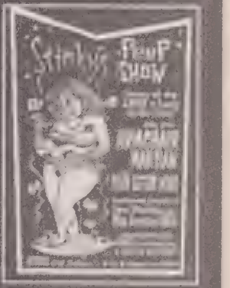


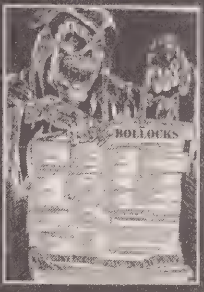


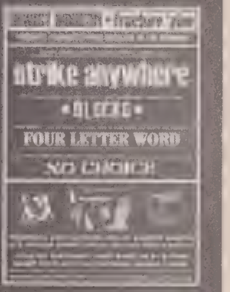






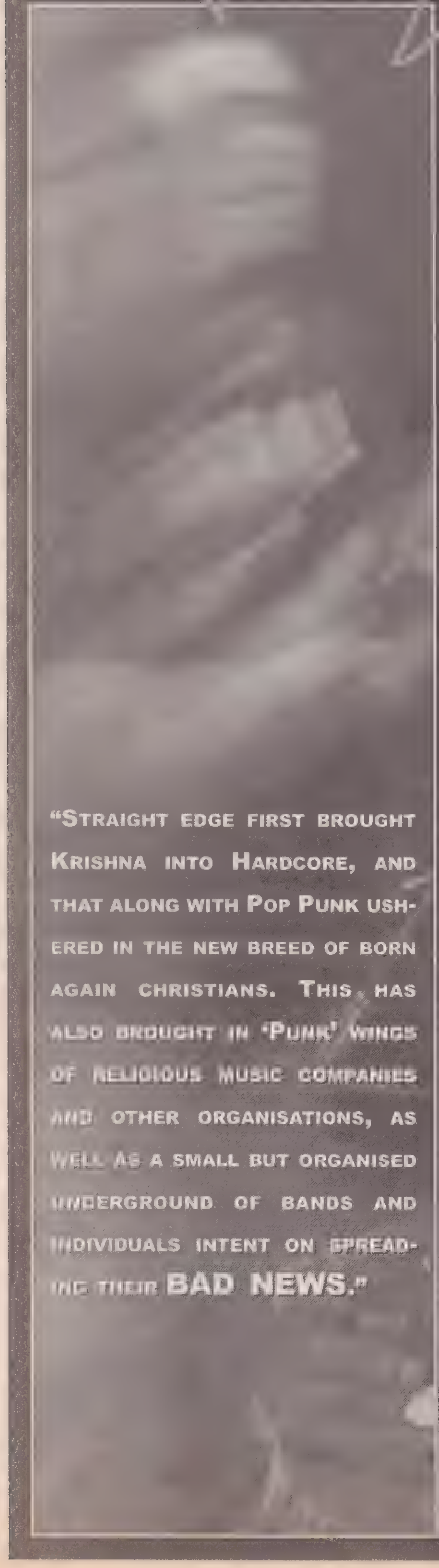






Anti-clockwise from bottom left (other page) : The new drummer Jon / The old school attack! (Welly and Chris) / **Top right (this page)** : Chris the bassist holds that pose! / **Next page and page after :** Demonic Welly / The whole band, just about / **Page 7 of interview :** Welly and Chris summon up yet more punk rock demons...

FOUR LETTER WORD



"STRAIGHT EDGE FIRST BROUGHT KRISHNA INTO HARDCORE, AND THAT ALONG WITH POP PUNK USHERED IN THE NEW BREED OF BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS. THIS HAS ALSO BROUGHT IN 'PUNK' WINGS OF RELIGIOUS MUSIC COMPANIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS, AS WELL AS A SMALL BUT ORGANISED UNDERGROUND OF BANDS AND INDIVIDUALS INTENT ON SPREADING THEIR **BAD NEWS.**"

great times. We met some great people and saw and did some amazing things. It's stuff like this that goes some way to defining who we are. Of course we had 'problems'. Every band does, it's inevitable. But it's ancient history. When five guys in a van go through two months of hellish endurance over about 15,000 miles, there's a definite bond there I think. As a band, we were too green. It was trial by fire, and it damn near broke us. It turned into psychological warfare, and the gigs suffered because of it. But so what? A lot more happened than the live set, some bad, some good. It was a rite of passage, and we got home, relatively unscathed. I don't 'hate' America. Granted there were aspects of that country, the people and culture, that I found either strange or abhorrent, but I'm not going to change it am I? I don't feel like I could go there now, it's seemed like occupied territory for the last few years.

Fracture - *Every month there seems to be something else that's "the shit" in both underground punk rock (remember WHN?, bandanas... how long did that last?) as well as in this whole new world which is totally overground, but still calls itself "Punk Rock" - I am talking "Nu-Emo-Metal", etc... all fads as far as I can tell (even if WHN? were good)... how does FOUR LETTER WORD "keep its cool" in light of the never-ending stuggle against "fad-dom"?*

Welly - If you mean do trends affect the band? No, I don't think so. Obviously the band's sound changes subtly over time, but that's more to do with the ever changing line-ups than trend chasing. I think we essentially sound like the same band as we did in 1995 when we did our first EP. I've said it many times, but I'll say it again; it's all about your reasons for doing a band in the first place. Y'know, are you going out to make a million fans or a million pounds, or are you just doing it for yourself? For me, I'm just all about the creative process. All I'm interested in is the conveyance of ideas through music, words and graphic images. If you can mix those three in such a way as to portray an accurate representation of what you are attempting to communicate, then you may achieve your aim. I just want to do the best I can, and put out the best possible music, words and art that I am capable of presenting within my own limitations of ability, and if other people appreciate it, are inspired by it, or maybe even if it makes them think, then I have achieved my aim. I'll leave the bullshit parade for the arseholes and sycophants, god knows, there's enough of them to keep the world turning.

Chris - There'll always be trends in Punk and there always has been, but there was never the need to pigeonhole like there is now, Nu-Metal/Emo/Screamo, call it what you want, is just the ghost of Heavy Metal rising once again and trying to suck the soul and passion out of another scene to resurrect all the flagging careers, and the sad thing is that this time the 'kids' are lapping it up, Metal tried to gain some cred through the Hip Hop scene in the early nineties, but the difference was anyone who liked Hip Hop realised how shit it sounded and would have nothing to do with it. Fuck all these 'Nu-Emo-Metal' bands, they're just sucking on the man's cock and as far as F.L.W. are concerned; we'll keep moving on and just sit back and laugh.

Fracture - *As you write all the lyrics, do you think it's important (essential, even) to keep your punk rock political? From what I can gather, there does appear to be bands that are almost "cashing in" on political punk right now - i.e. suddenly "picking up the political punk" gauntlet, so to speak, and proclaiming that - POLITICAL PUNK IS BACK!!!! because they say it is... you know who I am talking about here... I say it never went away, it just maybe wasn't on huge Californian record labels... as a lyricist of a band that has intelligence and vision in its words, are you at all insulted by this?*

Welly - "Not much of a change in style for them - same miserable as hell lyrics... Lyrically, FOUR LETTER WORD cover death, scene 'politics', end of the world type stuff, and just general complete and utter bitterness and negativity. As I said, no change there then. U.K. Punk Rock for miserable people who hate everything." (Monk Dave, Fracture Issue 9). Ha ha ha... shit has a habit of creeping up and biting you on the arse sometimes doesn't it!? Well there are people who say we should welcome any avenues that'll lead people into thinking, but yeah, you can't help feeling cynical when suddenly bands who have been at best a-political, and at worst anti-political for years, suddenly decide there's money to be made when they see Michael Moore's book sales (but then again, how much do 'bands' really figure in the scheme of things?). On the bright side, I'd like to hope that a lot of people are finally realising that politics is not just the domain of 'boring old men arguing' or 'it's all too complicated'. There's nothing bloody complicated about it. All you have to do is realise that everything is political, from decisions you make about where to spend your money, to how you perceive the way current events are being presented to you. It's like some guy called Pericles said around 430 B.C.; "just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you." We have the closest thing to a totalitarian fascist world state than the human race has ever seen before, and because the machine is so efficient in dripfeed propaganda, it can convince people that politics do not affect them, all the while taking more and more liberties. And now what? Everyone woke up to a fucking nightmare. There is absolutely no excuse to be apolitical, not now, not ever. Everyone should take care to find out as much about what's happening; know themselves and know their enemy. Because you can be damn sure they'll know all about you if the need arises. Yes we need political bands, but for honest reasons, and with integrity. Not just because it fits inside some stylistic framework, but because they want to convey ideas. It's just as bad to be a bandwagon jumping political megastar Pop band as it is to be a acceptance-seeking Anarcho crusty political band. Be true to yourself and it will shine through.

Chris - I couldn't care less what people sing about, but honesty and relevance to their / your lives has got to be a factor... girlfriend / boyfriend shit don't cut it, and you may as well be listening to Elton John.

Fracture - *FOUR LETTER WORD, although political, also has a melodic edge to its music - something which didn't appear to sit so well with the black and white brigade a few years back... and hence the band never seemed to have a 'niche" audience (too poppy for Bradford, too pissed off for pop-punk bills)... did this help or hinder the band back in those days? Do you think that nowadays there's more "inter-scene breeding", so to speak?*

Welly - Before we did the albums, it was a nightmare trying to get gigs, and even when we did, people just didn't seem to be very interested. We've always languished in this imaginary no-man's land between scenes (or maybe we're just shit, yeah, that's probably nearer the truth - ha ha ha!) From things I've read over the years, it seems that older people consider us a Pop Punk band, and younger people lump us in with the traditional U.K. Punk scene, y'know like H.I.T.S. or something (but when asked to play there, we declined politely), although, we definitely don't align ourselves with either. Natural outsiders - we must be lucky I guess - ha ha ha! Just before we got to do our first EP, the thought had crossed our minds to call it a day, because it had been four years, and it was becoming more and more obvious that no-one gave a shit. I know we were still in a developmental stage then, but how many young bands around today would wait that long? Exactly. Then again, that was probably a good thing, because at least we never released anything we're embarrassed about. Nowadays there's so many labels and bands that we're drowning in mediocre garbage recorded three months after a band forms. Call me a purist, but all this 'inter-scene breeding' is another virus eating away at the underground. Not only has hybrid genre-splicing never really paid dividends, unless for mainstream money machines. But when the corporate labels and media realised there was a cool-factor attached to "Punk" it opened the floodgates for "Rock" being in fashion again. Now the lines have been blurred and we're losing definition between independence and corporatisation. People call it a scene, but to me now it looks more like an industry; people setting up labels to find the next big thing and signing bands of all styles regardless of ethics, just to create a business for themselves; bands throwing the term 'Punk' around like it's going out of style, only to deny and decry it when they get that major record deal they'd been tooling for all along. These people are talking about 'Street Teams' for fuck's sake; apparent indie labels and bands thinking they look good by acting like a multi-national corporation. Not only is there absolutely no quality control now in regards to what's being sold and what's being accepted in the supposed 'underground', but you have to have your bullshit detector on full all of the time because you never know what you're listening to, what you're really buying, or what you're being sold. It really is quite disgusting that certain business aspects of the American 'Punk' scene have managed to discard everything that was worked for over a couple of decades in favour of a capitalist business model. With that came the tactics, the lies and chicanery, the sycophants and the frauds. I thought we were trying to create an alternative not big brother's little fuckin' brother. And as for the music; it's all nice and entertaining, all the parts are in the right place, and everything is very professional, but the majority of it just doesn't demand your attention. I listen to all manner of new music, and the more popular stuff especially, just doesn't quite cut it. If I find myself thinking about something else when I'm listening to music, then

FOUR LETTER WORD

I don't think that Music is doing it's job. Trends are just that. When you've been around for more than five minutes, you learn to see what's coming before it hits, it's just a big cycle. Then you watch all the bandwagon jumpers riding coat-tails and all the trendy poseurs playing catch-up. The new people think that nothing happened before them of any worth, and try to be pariahs or just take the piss out of it because they think it makes them look like they know what they're talking about. The good people stay and the rest dissipate into 'adulthood'. They come and go. If we keep banging away long enough, we'll have to be trendy sooner or later. After all, even a broken clock is right twice a day - ha ha ha!

Chris - This being my second stint in the band. It's been good to come back into it and see how much the sound has changed over the years from when we first got the band up and running. Someone told me that our first demo sounded like Prog. Rock but he used to be a Smiths fan so I didn't take much notice anyway (ha, ha). Inter-scene breeding - have we got one?

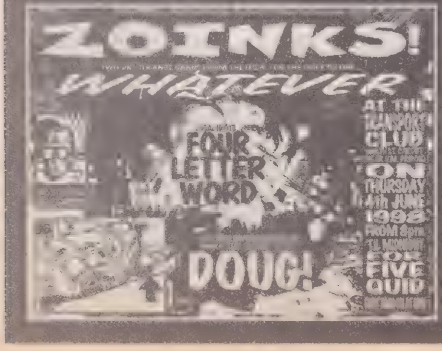
Fracture - *Where do you come from musically? I mean, what did you grow up listening to, what do you listen to nowadays - and how has all that been combined to create the kind of music that you do? I think FOUR LETTER WORD are definitely one of the more difficult to describe / compare bands that I have come across... why is that? Maybe it's the mix of both US and UK influences?*

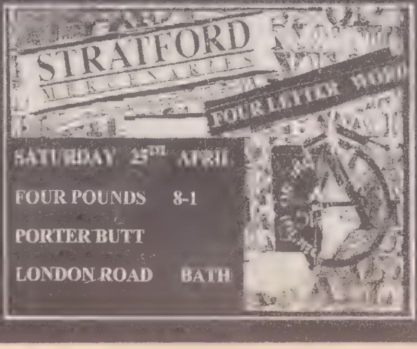
Welly - I'm from the Hardcore generation. I liked early Punk when I was a little kid when I heard it on the radio, but it wasn't 'allowed', so my first music was Two-Tone; yes I was an eleven year old Rude Boy in 1979-1980. After that all went Pop and fell apart I got into The Jam and that took me further into more powerful and political music. They split up and I found myself with this feeling that I was looking for something I hadn't found yet, and when a school friend's older brother loaned me 'Fresh Fruit' by DEAD KENNEDYS and 'Inflammable Material' by STIFF LITTLE FINGERS saying something like; "this might be what you're looking for" it was a life-changing event. DEAD KENNEDYS, and specifically buying compilations that they were on like 'Let Them Eat Jellybeans' really opened my eyes. The idea that there were thousands of bands all over the world was just enthralling for me. This was at some point in 1983. Anyway, DEAD KENNEDYS took me on this wild expedition into unknown territory and from there I found 'Flex Your Head', MINOR THREAT, GOVERNMENT ISSUE, BLACK FLAG, D.O.A., M.D.C., HUSKER DU, TOXIC REASONS, CIRCLE JERKS, AGENT ORANGE, NAKED RAYGUN, ANGRY SAMOANS, 'Dischord' Records (1981-1991), YOUTH BRIGADE and B.Y.O., M.I.A., BAD RELIGION, CONFLICT , D.I., SOCIAL DISTORTION, SCREAM, INSTIGATORS, GRAY MATTER, DESCENDENTS, SOCIAL UNREST, DAG NASTY, CODE OF HONOR, 'Posh Boy' Records, ADOLESCENTS, TSOL, JERRY'S KIDS, HDQ, REAGAN YOUTH, 7 SECONDS, KRAUT, D.R.I., THE FREEZE, TH'INBRED, OFFENDERS, N.O.T.A., SUBHUMANS, SPERMBIRDS, and many many more, not to mention those Flipside, 'P.E.A.C.E.' and Boston compilations. I still mainly buy and listen to old Hardcore era stuff. I get to hear the majority of new music through the zine, so I'm lucky in that I don't have to waste time and money on the 90% of drivel that calls itself Punk, or even worse 'Hardcore' today. I don't know how all this comes through in FOUR LETTER WORD's music, after all, I'm only the vocalist and it's impossible to tell what your own band sounds like objectively. Yeah, I've never read or heard anyone saying we sound like any particular band or genre, and that's the biggest compliment you can get. I've personally always tried to approach writing whereby each song is treated individually, and the music hopefully reflects the mood of the lyrics, rather than sticking rigidly to one style throughout everything. When you listen to how Punk or Hardcore used to be played, every band sounds distinct and different, and a lot of their songs were too, now they all sound the same because they stick rigidly to genre stylistics and tainted production values. I never understood people who formed a band to sound like another band.

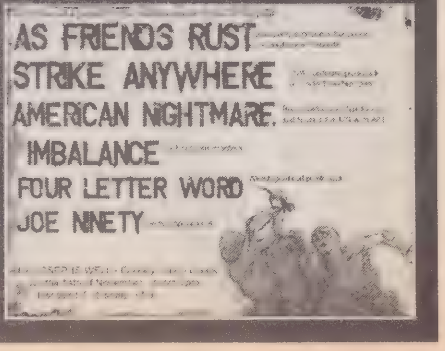
Chris - As far as musical influences go... WHODINI, SOCIAL UNREST, SPECIALS, B-BOYS, MANTRONIX, ADOLESCENTS, BLACK FLAG, DAG NASTY, MINOR THREAT, early D.R.I., PUBLIC ENEMY, DESCENDENTS, TRICKY TEE and I'll leave it at that before I go getting all obscure on your ass.

Fracture - *How have you seen the world change in general throughout your time in punk rock? As someone who is in their mid-thirties and has children, how and why do you keep on doing what you're doing? I know a lot of other people, when they have kids, seem to kind of slowly shuffle away from punk rock, even when they say that that will never happen to them - why are you different? Strength of conviction and a true belief in what you're doing, or...?*

Welly - OK, rant time. Things have got worse in the last twenty years in some ways but not in others. There's a whole propaganda industry out there dedicated to making us all believe that the world has changed forever, to keep us all so damn petrified that we don't challenge the status quo. If you believe the global media that speaks for the dominant right wing then you are in constant danger of being attacked by terrorists, perverts, criminals, gun-wielding drug-addled youth, viruses, diseases and personal debt. The whole world's going to hell, there's evil people trying to get into your country, all your social services are falling apart, your society is collapsing. But it's all just illusory tactics for social control. It is the chaos of the class war waged on the peasants by the rulers. It's what the cold war and nuclear deterrent were to the latter half of the twentieth century and what religion was before that. When people are scared, isolated and only concerned with consumption and trivia, they are not a threat to the power structure. Ultimately, people are the same and society is the same. There was always crime and terrorism, but now you get to hear







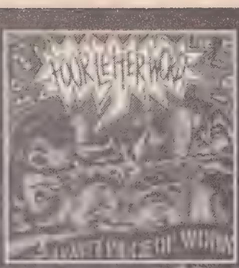
about it a lot more because the global media has so much airtime to fill up with sensationalism, and the owners of that media have an agenda to fulfil. The propaganda is so constant as to be dripfed from every mouthpiece of corporate-government (business and government are almost synonymous now; businesses are dictatorships and government is catching up) that people don't even know they are being indoctrinated. All the while, expand 'choice' to untold levels, but actually restrict real choice to a very narrow parameter, and people will be fooled into thinking 'choice' still exists at all. When we are all police, there will be no criminals or when they make so many things to be a crime, then people will not be able to live without breaking laws. This is fascism, but now they call it the new world order. The permanent war for this new world order is a dance of death between the dominant extreme right wing military-corporate-government and the 'terrorists' (that's what they're called at the moment, they used to be called 'Communists'). The empire seeks to dominate absolutely, and is thus being drawn into a global guerrilla war on many fronts. Both sides are playing into the hands of the other, and the global media is the virtual theatre that determines where the next wholesale slaughter will take place. This can only escalate as one side draws the other further and further into the game of chicken. The outcome is always identical; the rich get more money and power while the world's gaze is permanently fixed on propaganda or the other distractions in the hope that they aren't the next downplayed statistics of the poor. The home 'front' isn't exempt either. Consider what the now retired Gulf war II general Tommy Franks told 'Cigar Afficionado' magazine in November of this year; that if there's another terrorist attack in the U.S. "the constitution will likely be discarded in favour of a military form of government." What has Punk Rock got to do with any of this? Well, it just carries on doing 'business' and taking itself very seriously. It has changed so much as to be almost unrecognisable, and like any microcosm, it has changed in step with mainstream society in that it's become gentrified and thus shifted to the right in the sense of becoming liberal and business oriented. Attitudes have become so middle of the road that various religions are now accepted, unquestioned and even encouraged in the present day 'Punk' scene. This is repulsive to me because religion was always one of the major things I thought Punk was fighting against. Fair enough, I hear all the bleating apologists saying 'it's a personal choice', but it's not quite that simple. Straight edge first brought Krishna into Hardcore, and that along with Pop Punk ushered in the new breed of born again christians. This has also brought in 'Punk' wings of religious music companies and other organisations, as well as a small but organised underground of bands and individuals intent on spreading their bad news. I don't know what the fuck this has got to do with 'Punk' or 'Hardcore'. The entire concept of religion is 'faith', which is to blindly and unquestioningly accept the notion of a supreme being or higher force and to also accept that certain people have a direct link with whatever 'god' it is, and to take their word as truth or decree. The entire concept is based around social control, it is about nothing else but obedience, conformity and hierarchy. By buying into it you are buying into being controlled. Whether it's socially or mentally. This is the antithesis of rebellion, revolution or progress, which to me is what Punk's original aspirations were about. If you can't see that, then it is because you have already been indoctrinated into the values and mindset of religious belief structures whether you care to admit it or not. I find it ironic that the same people who espouse religious doctrines often use it in tandem with positivity, progression or enlightenment, but it's the exact opposite. Religion looks to tradition for answers to unanswerable questions, whereas to reject notions of immortality is to really move forward, because you are not accepting someone else's answer, but creating your own. The only answer is that there isn't one. As to why I'm still involved? Well it's manifold really. Why should I stop doing what I enjoy if I don't feel any differently about than I did twenty years ago? We are all encouraged to judge ourselves by others standards, it's part of the architecture of society, it fuels the class system, and it keeps people giving up, fitting in and working 9-5, because they believe they'll get higher up the ladder if they do. Human nature pulls towards acceptance and not swimming against the tide. I don't feel any different now I have kids. I used to think it was this big line you cross where everything changes, but it's not. But why do I still do it? Because it is a creative outlet where I can work on my own terms with no expectation placed on me by myself or others. In the 'real world' I would be nowhere and make nothing of my own design or desire, and I have no interest in that world. In D.I.Y. Punk Rock everyone can have an equal voice, and that is a real and working 'democracy', and it's nothing like the one the media keep talking about. It discards the mainstream notion of others doing everything for you (including your thinking), and hands complete creative control to the individual over their art, music, words, thoughts and ideas. D.I.Y. wouldn't exist today if it wasn't for Punk Rock, and Punk Rock wouldn't exist today if it wasn't for D.I.Y. There, I put the world to rights in just three paragraphs - ha ha!

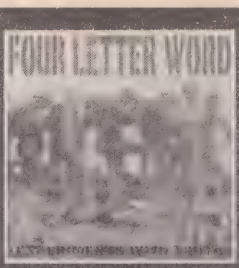
"**The internet** is fucking up the gig scene. At the same time as having this glut of corporate venues suddenly interested in live 'Rock' music again after completely ignoring it for the last dozen years, there's also an emerging gig scene that only seems to be advertised on internet forums with e-flyers (whatever the fuck they are). As a result, these gigs are poorly attended by the same people."

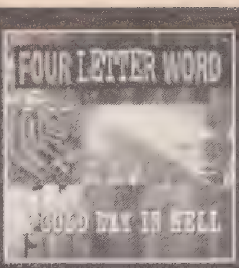
Chris - I don't think people so much 'shuffle away' from Punk when kids pop onto the scene, you just realise having mouths to feed is a bit more important than picking up on whatever's cool this week or going to a gig. And also, you just haven't got the money to be living the Punk Rock dream anymore anyway. I think any true music fan no matter what their taste will never lose the need for their next 'fix'.

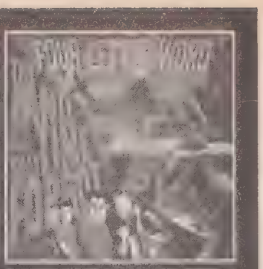
Fracture - *You've also been involved in making the fanzine Artcore for, what, quite a few more years than you've been in the band - when did that start up, and as with the band, how come you're still making it*

FOUR LETTER WORD









almost 20 years ago." Fanzines back then were definitely a lot more creative [illegible] 'art' positive [illegible] again an integral part [illegible] doing everything from record cover art to the distribution of our records. What [illegible] Obviously, I think the internet has definitely [illegible] or rather [illegible] means to make a [illegible] and instead they [illegible] full [illegible] chatting [illegible] basically [illegible] the fuck's wrong with people nowadays. Too many computer games" [illegible] What can we do to [illegible] just [illegible] keeping on?

Welly - Yeah, that was my way into the whole D.I.Y. thing. I started it in January 1986 inspired by seeing masses of zine reviews in 'Maximum Rock'n'Roll'. I didn't really know what I was doing and it showed. The reasons for still doing it are ditto to the above really, cuz I love it and it fuels me. I dedicate more time to the zine than anything else. That and the band are the reason I work as little as possible, so I can devote the maximum amount of my life to what I enjoy and believe in. I consider myself to be very lucky. If my family and personal fulfilment were currency, I'd be rich. In reality, I'm fuckin' broke, but who gives a shit about money. Yeah things have changed in regards to zines over the years and not for the better really. People have got lazy and slipped into that 'other people do it for you' mindset I mentioned earlier, probably because they were weened on nineties major label Pop Punk, at which point the glossy magazines championed the Punk cause they'd hated for the previous fifteen years. There was definitely a cut-off point. I do feel kids today are missing out on so much because they've grown up with everything from the internet and video games stifling their creativity, plus being fed some of the most banal music as 'the best there is' out there. One small example of this big shift in attitude towards art and creativity is the demise of the fly poster. The internet is fucking up the gig scene. At the same time as having this glut of corporate venues suddenly interested in live 'Rock' music again after completely ignoring it for the last dozen years, there's also an emerging gig scene that only seems to be advertised on internet forums with e-flyers (whatever the fuck they are). As a result, these gigs are poorly attended by the same people. If it's a private club, [illegible] enough, but they're giving the bands a raw deal. In fact they're wasting their time. This in mind (plug time), Artcore in conjunction with Left of the Dial zine from Houston, Texas, is bringing 'Visual Vitriol' to the U.K. next year. It is an exhibition of David Ensminger's collection of Punk flyer art spanning 25+ years and 12+ countries. There's going to be 1000+ flyers on display, with blank boards to encourage people to display their own work or just old flyers they enjoy. It's not about nostalgia, it's a history lesson and a living example of the creativity of Punk Rock and the D.I.Y. process. The exhibition is going to run in the daytime, with a gig in the evening featuring FOUR LETTER WORD and David happens to be the drummer for Randy 'Biscuit' Turner of the BIG BOYS current band and is bringing him along. We're putting a band together called THE BISCUIT BOYS who will be performing a set of BIG BOYS classics as well as a few other choice covers. It's early days, but here's how it's shaping up so far: Thursday 29th April 2004: London T.B.C. Friday 30th April: Brighton - Phoenix Gallery/Free Butt. Saturday 1st May: Southampton - Joiners Arms. Tuesday 4th May: Newport - TJ's. Wednesday 5th May: Bristol - The Cube Cinema / T.B.C. Thursday 6th May: Liverpool - T.B.C. Friday 7th May: T.B.C. Saturday 8th May: Leeds - Joseph's Well. This is all subject to change and to be confirmed, but see a flyer near you for details in the coming months. The zine is regular as clockwork now and Artcore issue twenty is out now and has MAD PARADE, STRUNG UP, HOLIER THAN THOU?, K-LINE, WASTED and DAY SKYWALKERS. 'Vaultage' has an unpublished interview and unseen photographs of BLACK FLAG, THE F.U.'S, DR. KNOW, TERMINUS, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and 'Smoke Seven' records. There's an interview with, and the art of, Brian Walsby, as well as 'The Daily Terrorgraph' and the usual rantin', ravin' 'n' reviewin'. All forty pages can be yours for £1.50 / 3 Euro / [illegible] post paid from me, and various other D.I.Y. outlets like Assembly Line, Inflammable Material, Out Of Step, Punker Bunker and All Ages. Shameless plug over. Webzines don't exist, literally.

Fracture - *So the band as it stands now, by the time we go to print you would have played your fist gig in, what, 18 months, there's rumours of a third album in the works as well... when do you think we can be expecting that? Is there anything else you want to add at all?*

Chris - There'll be no third LP as there'll be some in-band argument and one of us or more will get all upset and leave. Don't forget music doesn't discriminate, but if you don't know what you're on about then shut the fuck up!

Welly - Oh goody, more self-promotion space. Well we've been writing this album for three years and culling off what's not up to par, so hopefully we can cobble together some half-baked nonsense. We've finally found a label who's prepared to stump up some recording money, and we're hoping to get it out by spring / summer 2004. Yeah, we're back on the gig circuit at last too, so look out for us stinking up a stage near you soon. If anyone wants to help us pay off our debts to the man, then come along to a gig or send us money in the post. In return, you can get any of these wonderful consumer goods; 'A Cold Day In Hell' 5 track CDEP (£4 / 6 EURO / $8); 'The Band That Time Forgot' 7 track heavy green vinyl 12" EP ([illegible] / 10 EURO / $15); 'Zero Visibility (Experiments With Truth)' 12 track CD ([illegible] / 9 EURO / $11); 'A Nasty Piece of Work' 13 track CD (£5.50 / 9 EURO / $11); LP ([illegible] / 9 EURO / $13); CS (£3 / 5 EURO / [illegible]); 'Do You Feel Lucky, Punk?' 2 track 7" Black or Red vinyl (£2.50 / 4 EURO / $5); and we've got some F.L.W. Logo workshirt style patches for 50p U.K. / 1 EURO / $1 World. Plus SAE / IRC or post free with something else. All these prices are (U.K. / Europe / World Air) postage paid. If anyone's interested, we have some openings in our street team, and we're going to continue spouting the Punk line until a better offer comes along. We'd be absolutely nothing without all our 'fans' out there, who we really care about, and er... yeah, all our brothers on the label man, they're like family. OK, we admit we started off in the Punk scene, [illegible] the publicity guys some street cred to work with, the kids like it cuz it's easy to [illegible] and let's face it, how the hell else would we have got a leg-up to the next rung? [illegible] All you amateurs playing [illegible] promoters and labels? [illegible] so very last season, [illegible] in your [illegible] Big shirts to [illegible] and [illegible] Numetalpunk [illegible] The new record's going to completely [illegible] the Punk / Hardcore [illegible] genre [illegible] don't know how you [illegible] This is FOUR LETTER WORD [illegible] off, thanks for the free publicity you suckers. We don't play the game.

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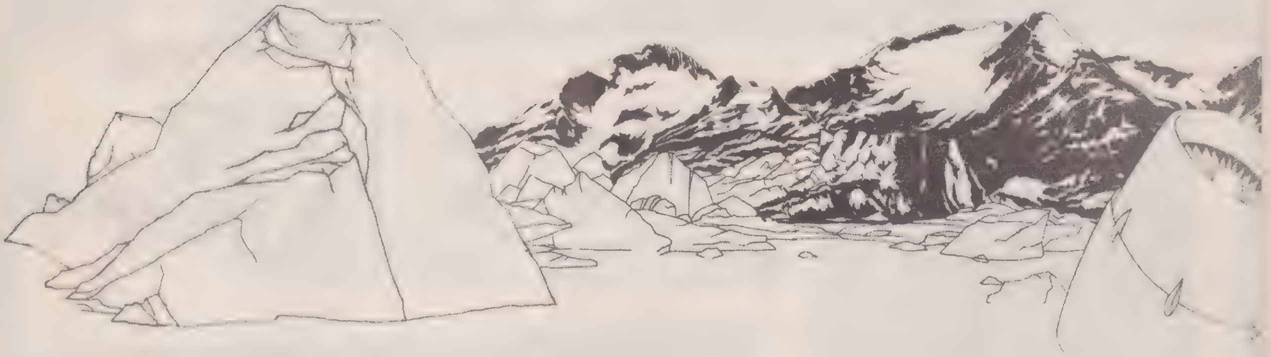

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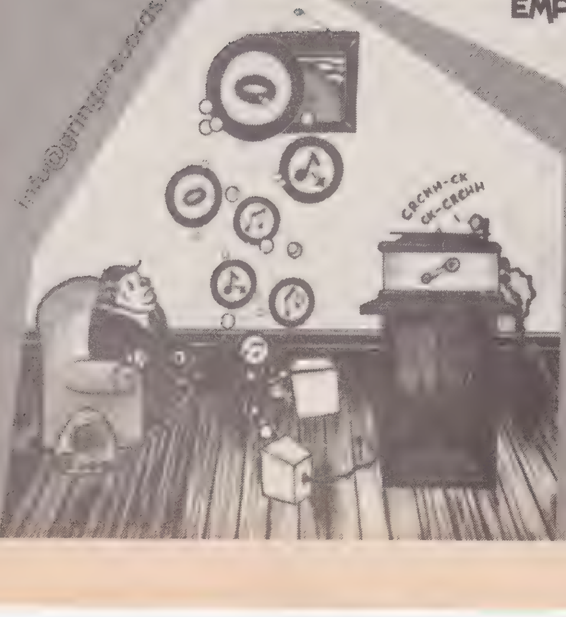

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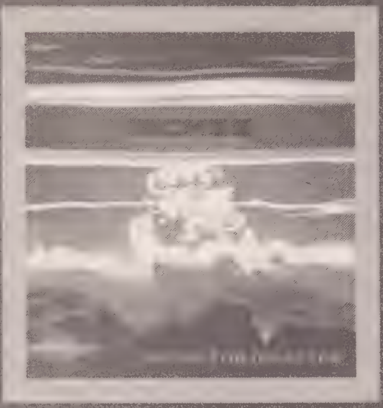

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BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT

BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT is a name you probably won't be familiar with - yet. They formed recently from the ashes of the mighty HOUSE ON FIRE, and as I have personally spent about 6 years wanting to interview at least one of Alex Ulloa's incredible fucking bands (they kept breaking up just as I was starting to think about getting questions together!) I figured I would get the fuck in there right now - third time lucky, as they say! I could tell you more about this incredible Gainesville, Florida band, but everything you need to know is contained within the following interview. But once more it's just so great to find a band that is fighting against the norm to keep this thing we love called DIY punk rock alive. This interview by Monk Dave was conducted via Email on 6th December, 2003.

Fracture - *So BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT is basically a brand new band, but a couple of you have been in some other pretty significant Florida bands before this, can you fill us in on that for the people reading this that might not know what I am on about here?*

Alex - Well, I used to be in 2Live Crew out of Miami, you know, doing the booty music thang, and Todd, of course, used to be in Molly Hatchet. Wait, sorry. I was in PANTHRO UK UNITED 13 and Todd was in DISCOUNT and then UNITAS. After PANTHRO, it took me about a year until I was able to get HOUSE ON FIRE going with Todd, Jim and Jason. Jason quit for a good job up north, and was replaced with Shane Haven, who also played drums in PANTHRO. He left, for personal reasons, and we had Danny from ARMY OF PONCH take over for a few months. As AOP tours so much, we felt off kilter, what with not having a full-time drummer. Personal differences as far as musical direction became far more apparent during this time, so Todd and I decided to begin over again. Troy had just moved to town From Valdosta, Georgia, and told us that his band, LUCKY STRANGER, was just breaking up, but that he and Bob (drums) wanted to start something new. Everything has been going much better than we had hoped for, so far.

Fracture - *Being a long-time resident of Gainesville, how have you seen the town's music scene grow and change in the last 15 years or so? Was there even much of a punk scene there before Var at No Idea started to put out everyone's records?*

Alex - I have lived in this town now for about 13 years, not counting one year that I left to travel and live other places, so I can't say too much about Gainesville prior to my moving here. When I did move here, however, around 1989, the only bands that were playing were either horrible hippy, jam bands, or sludgy, Sub-Pop wanna-be bands, who, in my opinion, were just as bad as the hippy bands. Goddamn, I do not need to hear some band wank over muddy, rehashed bullshit for 20 minutes and call it a single song. Seriously, bands would have 4 song sets, with each song being 20 or so minutes long. I was 20 or 21 at the time, was into NAKED RAYGUN, BLACK FLAG, BIG BLACK, HUSKER DU and old-school HC and punk rock. I couldn't even comprehend, at that time, how anyone would want to listen to that shit, much less play it. I can see the appeal now, even when I'm sill not into it, but then? Hell, I'm not some enlightened prodigy of musical understanding at 35, and I sure as fuck wasn't at 21. Blah blah blah. THE JEFFERSONS, started by my good friend Ivan Osario, came along and saved the world of Gainesville music, as far as I'm concerned. Finally, a band from Gainesville who did not feel embarrassed to show that they loved the CLASH and the RAMONES, and played 2 to 3 minute songs which one could jump around to. After them, if memory serves, came SPOKE, RADON and WORDSWORTH. It was fucking wonderful to go to a show again and know that you would be able to jump around like an imbecile, and actually enjoy yourself. Imagine that. The Hardback, of course, helped foster all of this, as then owner, Alan Bushnell, was willing to let anyone play, as well as give them most of the door money. Var, previously to most of this happening, had been plugging away, thanklessly, putting on shows and putting out 7"s with each issue of No Idea. I think that he helped keep some hope going, and provided a means to preserve and feed the fast growth of bands from around 89-90 and on. I believe that between No Idea and Rob McGregor, who recorded most of the punk bands in Gainesville, and still does, Gainesville punk rock was given a lifeline and, eventually, a base to grow from. Var and Rob built the foundations for where Gainesville punk rock is now.

Fracture - *What keeps you in Gainesville? I presume it's*

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CAN BE PUNK ROCK, TO FEEDING INTO A SYSTEM BASED ON ACCU-
AS MUCH DISTANCE AS POSSIBLE BETWEEN BANDS AND THE VERY

definitely a place to be for the punk rock creative mind, but there's not much else there is there?

Alex - The music thing is definitely the main thing that keeps me here, as this is one of the easiest places in the world to keep a working band going. The distances are short, the rent is cheap, hell, everything in Gainesville is cheap, and there is already an established scene that allows bands to have places to practice, play, record and get music distributed. The inexpensive living situation allows bands to pick up and tour for large periods of time, and there are enough people around who are touring to give tour contacts to people who are trying to learn how to set up a tour. For me, there isn't much else, but I'm not much of a nature person. This is a beautiful area of the country, and I think one of the best places in Florida. The weather is almost always beautiful, which makes settling into a good, solid bit of depression difficult at times, although I seem to manage to pull it off with tremendous regularity. There are lakes freakin' everywhere, and some nice nature trails, although, again, I don't go in much for that nature shit. I don't want to sound like some kind of member of the Gainesville tourism board, but suffice it to say that there is some great stuff to do here, completely unrelated to music, including a stadium that seats about 84,000 people or more, and fills up for every University of Florida home football game, bringing in a carnival-type crowd for a few Saturdays every year. It can be fun just to watch entire families walking around, drunk, in school colours screaming, "GO GATORS!" and shit like that.

Fracture - *I'd like to talk some more about PANTHRO UK UNITED 13 if we can, as that band seemed to be really going somewhere after the album came out, I even remember getting an email from you about setting up a potential UK tour (this was like 1997 / '98). then just as you were on the verge of a US tour with HOT WATER MUSIC, everything seemed to rapidly implode - what happened at that time, and do you regret anything that occurred around then?*

Alex - Things did seem to be working well in some respects for us at that time, but there were a few things that felt completely wrong to me then as well. For one thing, the communication that we had earlier in the band was not there as much. These things can happen in any relationship that's moved into being a few years deep. One just begins to take the communication thing for granted, and stop seeing it as something that always needs to be worked at. I don't regret what came about, although I would never handle things the way I did then. I made some decisions that I felt needed to be made at the time, but I believe that I enacted those decisions in a piss poor manner. I can be a fucking child at times, and it cost me a damn close friendship for the sake of proving some ephemeral "point". I'm glad to be where I am, as I tend to be driven by failings, but I loved the time I had in that band and am glad to have had the times I had with those guys. There was a much more innocent feel to the whole thing then, which allowed us to do things we would never had done if we actually knew what we were getting into, but it taught us that these things could happen, such as touring all the time, when no one has any clue as to who the fuck you are. That shit is so damn important. That band taught me a great deal about the discipline that is necessary for a band, especially once one knows what one is going to have to face, in terms of bad shows, bad tours, and just hanging in and banging away.

Fracture - *Who generally writes the lyrics for the band, and what kind of topics do you cover in your songs?*

Alex - At this time, I am doing most of the lyric writing, but we do have a song that Todd wrote the words for, and he will probably be doing more and more lyric work as we start writing more songs with this band. As far a what gets covered, shit, I have trouble even figuring that out sometimes. What the hell do I write about? I tend to write about relationships. Not lovey-dovey relationship crap, but relationships with society, with oneself, and the interaction of these two. This sounds like a cop-out to me, but it's about as good an answer as I'm able to give without sounding too much like some self-obsessed jackass. Unresolved, self-destructive anger; fear; loss; greed; selfishness; ego; self-reliance tempered by an understanding of the interconnection implicit in being a member of society; cats; growing from anger and ignorance to understanding where the pain of others and, consequently, oneself can come from; and sometimes fucking.

Fracture - *Now I know from conversations we've had when you were in town that your approach to everything you do with your music is super DIY - from setting up tours for the band from your computer to being totally repulsed with things like "press photo's" that so many bands and labels have nowadays - how important is it for the band you're in to remain stringently DIY when so many other bands seem to be literally selling out left, right and centre?*

Alex - I think that one of the best aspects of punk rock is the DIY attitude. Why the fuck should you wait around for someone to do something for you? Everyone needs help, but that doesn't mean that you're going to get it sitting around waiting. It can be a pain in the ass to set up shows and tours, with the same going for getting a handful of fuck-ups together to write songs, practice them, and try to record them. It feels damn good though to look back at this stuff and know that it all happened, whether it was a show, a practice, a finished song, a finished record, or a tour, because you made it happen. Some fuckface with a suit or some flunky hired by a suit didn't come in and hand this shit to you on a platter, you got your ass up, and showed yourself in a very empirical way that you believe in yourself, that

FEEDING BACK INTO A SYSTEM BASED
PASSION FOR MUSIC AND THE DIRT THAT
MULATION OF PERSONAL WEALTH, WITH
PEOPLE WHO HELPED FOSTER THEM."

you are able to create something, able to make something happen. This is being alive, just doing the little things each day, whether that's sending off a few emails for a show or to get contacts, or buying a band mate some guitar strings or a cable because he's strapped for cash at the moment. Every time I go on tour I become a little more optimistic about humanity, as we'll meet some person who goes out of her or his way to do things for us, when said person doesn't know us from any other group of shitheads making noise; and I'll see these same people treating every band in the same, ridiculously generous way. I never cease to be amazed by these people, who are fucking everywhere, just doing their part for the sake of punk rock and just being decent people. It's difficult to maintain a sense of humanity-as-hopeless-and-hapless-cause-so-fuck-em-all when some stranger, who may not have even heard your band, or might not like your band even if she or he has heard you, is, happily, I might add, giving you a place to sleep, and possibly feeding you, as well as providing pleasant conversation. I absolutely love this. Hell, Niall over in Dublin and Hilary in London both put me up this past May simply on an email request for a place to stay for a couple of days while I was wandering around over there. I didn't even have the whole band-on-tour-thing going. I can only hope that some of that generosity and compassionate nature rubs off on me. I can understand why a band would jump into an offer of ass-loads of cash and the promise that they'll never have to worry about anything ever again beyond practicing, and playing; especially if you are used to working thankless, shit-for-pay jobs. However, success comes from the very DIY, organic network of people that many bands leave behind in favour of money and ease. This is more tragic to me than anything, as one goes from feeding back into a system based on trust, friendship, work, effort, and a genuine love and passion for music and the dirt that can be punk rock, to feeding into a system based on accumulation of personal wealth, with as much distance as possible between bands and the very people who helped foster them. It's not a matter of "owing" something to anything, but rather, it's losing out on being able to help further a grassroots system that helps anyone who is willing to try. Clearly, an enormous band will attract more ass-kissers and people who would otherwise not do a fucking thing, but what's wrong with getting help where you can get it? Actions can speak louder than the best intentions.

Fracture - *You're also someone that definitely comes from a very "leftist" thinking perspective - does your outlook on life and the world in general, (ie. the way you live day to day) tie in with your punk music based DIY mindset? What I mean is, genuine DIY should, in reality, be more than just about the music - it should be completely life-encompassing to have any real political relevance - do you agree with this?*

Alex - I would say that the best way to live is to be true to the things that you find to be correct. If one is to say one thing, but not live according to those principles, this will eat away at you. Living a lie can make one's life a misery. Still, I am in no position to tell anyone how to do a damn thing. I want to play music, so I play music and make choices in everyday decision making to accommodate that. I am vegan, so I make decisions in what I do with that in mind. I don't like government, but I do believe in the enlightenment principle of government coming from the consent of the governed and so make daily decisions, as well as voting decisions, with that in mind. I see society as needing to respect the rights of the individual, but this needs to be tempered by the understanding that no part of a human society is an unreachable or an untouchable island. If a part of society is sick or damaged, it affects the whole thing. I think that the DIY thing is wonderful at addressing this, as it shows individuals, each doing their own thing, and not necessarily working towards the same goals, but banding together and giving aid when needed, without an expectation of some obscenely enormous financial reward. The historical notions of left, right and centre are clearly becoming outmoded ideas of the 19th and early 20th centuries, as technology brings out the ability to eradicate the boundaries once imposed by both geography, and the speed of communication; although for me personally, that which is traditionally considered "left" is preferable to that which is traditionally considered "right". The internet serves as DIY medium for any who have access to it, which grows daily. I think that I'm beginning to ramble now, and I'd rather not fall into the trap of talking too much new-age-hippy-feel-good shit. Suffice it to say that no one can stand alone (unless you're in a movie) and I always try to take that idea into consideration with most of what I do.

Fracture - *As the punk scene grows bigger and bigger, and becomes more corporate, and you also have fucking closet nazi skinhead bands releasing records on supposedly "punk rock" labels, what do you think the people and bands that are genuinely supportive of the true DIY underground can do keep things alive for years to come? Maybe the things we hate can make us stronger?*

Alex - Again, no one lives in a bubble, and the homogeni-

"I HAD SOMEONE TELL ME ONCE THAT A PARTICULAR BAND I WAS PROMO PHOTOS. WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN? I LIKE STANDING IN AN ALLEY, TRYING TO LOOK LIKE ALL 200 POUNDS KICK MY ASS. IF I WANT TO SEE THEM, I GO TO A SHOW, OR LOOK

sation of punk rock by corporations can't help but affect DIY shit, but there will always be people out there who are willing to put in the time and effort to make things work, playing by their own rules and doing it for the sake of knowing that accomplishments were made through a shared sense of community, and belief that greed doesn't always have to be the main motivating factor in financial decisions. I would say that, for me, the worry becomes having DIY people begin to mimic the corporate model, use it as a template, rather than simply doing something in a particular manner because that's simply the way you want to do it. As you mentioned in your last question, I had someone tell me once that a particular band I was in would eventually need to have promo photos. What the fuck is that supposed to mean? I don't need to see a band that I like standing in an alley, trying to look like all 200 pounds of this band put together could kick my ass. If I want to see them, I go to a show, or look for live photos in a magazine. I was talking about some of this shit with my friend Bill McFadden and he said that being in a touring punk band is like being in a pirate ship. How fucking awesome is that!?! Arghhh! I'll keel haul ye, yeh scurvy corporate dog! Who the fuck doesn't want to be a pirate? Pirates fucking rule! I think that that's the way to keep the spirit of DIY alive, to remember that the main reason any of us are doing this in the first place is because we're all fucking weirdo's and this shit is fucking fun. Fuck MTV, MTV2 and all of that crap, it's just prefabricated dreams. Argghhhhhh!!!!! Punk rock is antiestablishment by its nature, so we need to just continue to be grating in some way or another. Not to exist for the sake of pissing off establishment types, but to do what we do regardless of who is paying attention. If someone is being an asshole, and is being a nazi or whatever, give people the facts so that they can decide what to do. Tell friends, and friends of friends. Word spreads fast these days. Swash me buckles and shiver me timbers.

Fracture - *Oh, can tell us a little about The Fest that has happened the last 2 years in Gainesville, this year looked so amazing Didn't you debut as BCSU at the latest one?*

Alex - The Fest was fucking awesome. I don't think I use that phrase quite enough. FUCKING AWESOME!!! Tight. Anyway, as I was saying, the Fest was FUCKING AWESOME! Tony Weinbender put on the first one in 2002, and it was pretty good, 2 days, 3 or 4 venues, and a bunch of bands. This time through though, holy shit, it was FUCKING AWESOME!! Again, it was 2 days, with 3 main venues, but there were more bands and a ton of out of town people. There was a home football game that weekend as well, so Gainesville tripled in size. There was an afternoon block party at the Future House a few houses down from mine, which was FUCKING AWESOME!!! There was just a good, fun feeling to the whole weekend. Tony gave us a great slot on Friday night at 11 or 11:20. We played the Common Grounds show, where they had to stop letting people in around 10 or 10:30. Goddamn, that was a fun time. We had originally been put on the Fest as HOUSE ON FIRE, and I told Tony that we had started the new band, but he, understandably, said that all the flyers and website stuff had us as HOF, so he couldn't change it all now. *"Just announce it at the show."* So, although we were listed as HOUSE ON FIRE, we announced, and played our first show as BCSU. It was FUCKING AWWWSOME!!!!!!! I can't wait for the next one. ARGHHHH!!! Avast!

Fracture - *So finally, you'll be over in the UK in March 2004 with THE ENABLERS, and your CDEP will be out soon as well - so what can we all expect from the BCSU?*

Alex - Hopefully we'll be plundering the Spanish main sometime soon, but until then we are hoping to have an album of material ready by next Spring, and plan on touring the US a great deal after the UK tour. Oh, we are going out for a week up to Virginia and back from Jan. 31st to Feb. 7th. We'd go longer, but we want to save up money for the UK adventure. We can be reached at **BLACKCOUGARSHOCKUNIT@yahoo.com**... Email is FUCKING AWESOME!!! Avast! Send up the Jolly Roger and send the bastards an iron shot "Hello!" ARGHHHHH!!!!!

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DON'T NEED TO SEE A BAND THAT I
OF THIS BAND PUT TOGETHER COULD
FOR LIVE PHOTOS IN A MAGAZINE."

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We'd like to extend a huge thanks to Dave, Russell and everyone else at Fracture for the support and enthusiasm over the last few years, and also for their belief in keeping music independent

Cursive on tour in Europe

February

20 London - Astoria (with The Ataris)
[illegible] Bristol - Academy (with The Ataris)
[illegible] Nottingham - Rock city (with The Ataris)
[illegible] Leeds - Met University (with The Ataris)
[illegible] Amsterdam - Paradiso
[illegible] Groningen - Vera
[illegible] Cologne - Gebäude 9 @ Intro Intim
[illegible] Hamburg - Molotow
[illegible] Berlin - Magnet

March

[illegible] Frankfurt - Cookys
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[illegible] Botanique - Brussells

New Ep "The recluse" out February 2004

The Ugly Organ CD/LP available now.

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Bright Eyes/Son Ambulance "Oh, Holy Fools" CD
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Cursive "Burst and Bloom" CD
Cursive "Domestica" CD
The Faint "Blank Wave Arcade" CD
The Good Life "Black Out" CD
Rilo Kiley "The Execution of All Things" CD
Rilo Kiley "The Execution of All Things" CD single/7"

Saddle Creek Europe | PO Box 34254 | London [illegible] | England
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Record Reviews

This is the last ever reviews section for Fracture. We have to tell you now that there's currently a box in the office with about 300 CD's that missed the deadline in it, a huge pile of vinyl and a ton of 'zines. Monk Dave and Russell Remains also pulled about 90 percent of their review items at the last minute, and Monk Dave edited out maybe 200 already written reviews, and made the text even smaller, just so the 'zine was not 140 pages of reviews alone. Whoever said "there's too much music and too many bands" is a fucking genius. Fuck music in it's stupid ass.

THE PEOPLE TO BLAME

Monk Dave (MD), Russell Remains (RR), David Stuart (DS), Dan McKee (DM), Graham Sleightholme (FU), Pete Craven (PC), Hilary Ellis (HE), Sean McKee (SM), Tom Craven (TC), Tom Willecombe (TW) , Gaz Suspect (GS), Mel Hughes (MH) and Jack Plug (JP)

7 TEEN - "Hooligans" CD/ 30:45.

"*Oi!*" - say it so many times and it becomes redundant (as if it meant that much in the first place). Russian skinhead music, fuzzed out guitars, thug sing-a-longs… I have more fun washing my fucking car. I guess you have to be either stupid or clinically retarded to enjoy this kind of crap. "Oi!, oi! oi!"? Howz about "Fuck, fuck, fuck… OFF!" *(DS)*

NEURO EMPIRE c/o Shemetova T.N. PO Box 58, 123100, Moscow, Russia.

A.18 - " Forever After Nothing" CD/ 33:57.

Is there a single good band on Victory now that RINGWORM seemed to have wised up and moved to Deathwish? A.18 fulfill Victory's rota of shit bands beautifully. I think someone in A.18 is ex something but really, when the music is as vacuous and generic as this I couldn't care less who the fuck they are. Kids with X'ed hands probably think this is cool which means it sounds like any other shit hardcore band that sound like a piss-weak imitation of the early Revelation back-catalogue. And I'm so glad the lyrics are written in a child's cack-handed scribe because they sound like a bullied ten year old's poetry. Utter shit. *(RR)*

VICTORY.

ACTITUD SUBVERSIVA / TROPIEZO - Split CD/ 20:55.

Wow, both bands are from Puerto Rico, now how cool is that? So yes, we get a smattering a blazing hardcore, done South American style. Fast, noisy, crusty and political as fuck. Fans of LOS CRUDOS, etc. will lap this up and why not, it's totally worth it. Killer split CD. *(MH)*

Felix Santiago, c/o Actitud Subversiva, Apt. 6, San Juan, P.R. 00925, Brazil.

ACTIVES, THE - "Reactivated" LP.

Retrospective collection for a lesser known UK82 band from Scotland that were knocking around for about 5 years, going thru a number of line-up changes, and managed to put out a couple of singles, and an album. Lost in Time. Their music is angry plodding mid-paced Chaos Punk, lyrics about being victimised, and getting loaded, and fighting in the street. It was no real surprise to read in the liner notes that although THE ACTIVES started out as 'frustrated roadies and followers' of Anarcho act THE ALTERNATIVE (who would go on to record for CRASS) the relationship between the bands soon soured. The ACTIVES name is vaguely familiar with me, but their music isn't, and too be honest on the evidence of these 17 demo / unreleased tracks, there was nothing that special about them. In fact, if we're gonna get right to the heart of the matter - it was music like this which made those soon to be discovered explosive fucked European and North American Hardcore bands such a ballistic shot in the arm *(PC)*

INTIMIDATION.

ADAM WEST - "Gods Gift to Women" CD/ 33:48.

Album #4 from these Washington DC RocknRollers, who come armed with enough detonation to blow your butt all the way down the Highway to Hell, and back. Follow the road signs - slab heavy groovacious riff-o-rama, punctuated and extenuated by one Jake Starr, the gravel throated songster who walks the walk in mighty convincing fashion. I can recommend checking out his live wire rants at Finnish RnR webzine LA BRUTA (www.labruta.com). And talking of misdemeanours in Helsinki City, the ode to that Cities ULTRA BIMBOOS "There's a Bimboo Under my Bed" is a fine number that's fused with Marshall smoking Scando Rock Action dynamics, that can't fail get your knee joints creaking, at the very least. Thoroughly solid collection, and it'd be great if they could make it to play the UK one of these days *(PC)*

PEOPLE LIKE YOU, www.peoplelikeyourecords.de

AGONY SCENE, THE - Self Titled CD/ 26:21.

I'll tell you what's agonising. Hearing band after band use the same formula to come up with a band name. Pacts, conspiracies, processes. Its all getting pretty tedious. Luckily then, THE AGONY SCENE totally and utterly destroy, quickly shaking off any presumed similarities with other bands with such excruciatingly stale band names. Fuse together the most glorious metal parts of ZAO, IMMORTAL, SHADOWS FALL, UNEARTH and THE CROWN, and you're kinda close. The production on this thing is absolutely faultless. I dread to think how much this release cost. I just went for a piss and wound myself going hands free just so I could peel off a bit of air guitar to this CD whilst relieving myself. Top stuff in a 'very fucking metal' kinda way. *(SM)*

SOLID STATE, PO Box 12698 Seattle, WA 98111, USA.

ALL THE SIXES - "The Things You Have To Do To Stay Alive" CD/ 37:37.

You know sometimes you get an admirer, someone who hangs around, trying to get closer. You like them, but not in that way, but you just can't seem to say *"Sorry, I'm not interested"* without being rude and hurtful… then you just get drunk one night and say something horrible like; *"I don't find you attractive or sexy, in fact you're a pig, you are annoying and you make me sick"* - your male friends laugh, your girl friends call you a cunt and the girl runs out of the pub in tears, destroyed. You feel kinda bad, but at least the truth is out in the open. Well, I've tried to listen to this CD in an attempt to find something positive and not be hurtful… it ain't happening. It's intolerable student wank with a drum machine, and the most appalling thing I've had to listen to this time around (Including the Russian Oi! - which takes some fucking doing, I tell ya!) The only positive I can see is that there isn't a track 20. 19 songs of sheer musical hell with no redeeming qualities whatsoever for me, I am actually quite depressed after listening to this on a gloomy Sunday afternoon… in fact, hang on a second… oh dear, the disc appear to snappeth in one's hands. Hey, it's cut my fucking palm open, bastard… I'm bleeding! At least that's more fun than listening to this disc. I'd rather nip down to my local police station and sign up as a sex offender than listen to this again. *(DS)*

ANARCHY, 17a Charnley Avenue, St. Thomas, Exeter, EX4 1RD, UK.

ANAL BEARD - "We the Dreg: 1997 - 2001 Variety Gala" CD/ 68:28.

Punished! That's what I am being, given well over an hours worth of ANAL BEARD to listen to! Absolute insanity, that's what this is. One AB track I can handle, two at a push if I'm feeling positively retarded, but 28 tracks of bad music, silly lyrics and utter stupidity has broken this man down to a quivering wreck of a human being. I think that's the intention of these South coast fruitbats. Amusing? Yes. Smile inducing? At times. Enjoyable? Fuck no! The world needs lunatics like ANAL BEARD (as we needed WAT TYLER… sniff, miss 'em) but if you play this at home, for your own enjoyment… I don't wanna be your friend, you be a fucking freak of nature. Bless 'em, like they thought they'd get a glowing review, they know how shite they are, that's why they continue. *(DS)*

BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

ANGELIC UPSTARTS - "Still From The Heart" CD/ 56:39.

This was, is, and forever will be the UPSTARTS lowest hour. After three great punk rock albums they unleashed this, an album of over-produced, weak, 80s electro pop guff. OK, so lyrically they still had a biting edge, but the music was and is truly awful… horrific. What were they thinking? If you want the definitive selling out album musically, then this is it. You can imagine most of the songs as guitar driven power punk tunes, but every last drop of punk rock sound had been sucked out in favour of lame pop work-outs. This comes with seven bonus cuts, demos of songs that sound a little better, but there are no redeeming features to this album on a musical level, they went too far and got it completely wrong. The thing is, the next album (I think) they put out "Reason Why?" was my favourite UPSTARTS record, it was very pop-orientated, but powerful with it, this, album, as I said is just plain horrific. *(DS)*

CAPTAIN OI!

ANGSTZUSTAND - "Malen Nach Zahlen" 12".

The flyer that is included with this 12" says they sound like URANUS or YAGE. As I'm not completely familiar with either sound wise, except their names I hope that will give you some indication of where they are coming from. Basically we have 12"s of totally angst ridden screamo/emo heavy hardcore. Guttural vocals, where the vocals views just bleed out of the speakers, coupled with harsh and heavy riffage. Though not in a metal way, more of a HIS HERO IS GONE, INHUMANITY harshness and blood curdling insanity. It sounds good at both 45 and 33 rpm. The front cover has two children on it, with a pencil joining numbers together, maybe their futures are already written before them? Who knows, but if ANGSTZUSTAND have anything to do with it - THEY WON'T. Although their lyrics are in German there's English translations, where they voice their discontent for the passive mules that humans have become. ANGSTZUSTAND welcome you to question your very own existence and give you 12" worth of reasoning. Get it and find out. *(MH)*

NARSHARDAA, c/o Springer, Wollbergsredder 9, 24113 Molfsee, Germany.

ANNALISE / GUNMOLL - Split 7".

Once again Mr Aston "Even" Stephens comes up trumps with a cracking piece of orange splattered vinyl, containing new tracks from two great bands - the UK's ANNALISE and Gainesville, Florida's gruff bastards, GUNMOLL. Both bands rule, and complement each other here. ANNALISE haven't recorded for ages, so it's good to hear these new songs - punchy, bassy melodic "mod" punk, just as you'd expect. Always good, with "16 Bottles Empty" being their new "Monk gets pissed, thinks he's in the band and tries to sing along" anthem... GUNMOLL rock it out in their great, straight down the line, LEATHERFACE style over their two tracks and, in all, this is a great release. *(MD)*

BOSS TUNEAGE.

ANTENNA - "On the Endless Waves" CD/ 15:18

Like Morrissey singing for a new-wave band that aren't as good as ABC. *(RR)*

MY FAVOURITE TOY (www.myfavouritetoy.de)

ANTIMANIAX - "I'm Without Sleep in this Desert of Concrete" CD/ 25:51.

A new mini-album of political hardcore from these Austrian skardcorers that is just as good as their last awesome album I reviewed last year. Like a heavy-ska version of PROPAGHANDI, but with enough hardcore to them to maintain interest and fantastic lyrics to boot (unfortunately no vegan recipes on this one though). A great, solid release. *(DM)*

HOUSEHOLD NAME.

APES, THE - "Oddeyesee" CD/ 52:47.

Ah, prog. Wasn't punk rock meant to be a reaction against prog? Now, if you're wearing NHS glasses and a Vidal Sassoon dyed black Emo parting, I should explain that when I say prog I'm not referring to the kind of sub-RADIOHEAD twatting about that goes on throughout your APPLESEED CAST records. No, I'm talking about the real deal, analogue keyboards, concept albums; you know the score and so, bruthas and sistas, do THE APES. I'll be honest; this album is a marked improvement on their previous offering "Fugue In The Fog". All the things I liked about FITF are present and correct; the DEEP PURPLE synth attack, the clanking distorted bass, the MC5 rabble rousing vocal style but the song writing is, in places, a lot better. They actually bothered to write some this time! They also appear to have been touched by the hand of George Clinton on this release. The album kicks off with a P-FUNK styled vocal intro and the artwork owes a considerable debt to late 70's P-FUNK album sleeves. This is a good thing. However, I have the same problem with this record as I

did with their last. Like label-mates / owners LES SAVY FAV at times it's just too wilfully arty to be loveable. Actually, since writing this review I have seen them and discovered that they suck live, they just sound like old Alice Cooper B-sides. Oh well. *(TW)*
FRENCH KISS, 111 East 14th Street, Suite 229, New York, NY 10003, USA.

ARIEL KILL HIM - "In The Pyramid" CD/ 50:57.
Swedish synth / guitar pop. A little bit BEEZEWAX, a little bit JIMMY EAT WORLD, a little bit ELLIOT. It's inoffensive enough and quite pleasant in it's own way but much like JEW and ELLIOT before, a lot of the emotion expressed becomes quite cloying and overly sentimental. The keyboards don't help matters much either. Instead of the epic sweeping sound that I'm sure the band were hoping the synths would lend to their overall sound we get a stodgy morass of sound I've not heard since SAVAGE GARDEN, thankfully, called it a day. Which is a shame, as some of the songs here would probably have shone through a little better had they had the benefit of a rawer, more stripped-down arrangement. *(TW)*
KASUAL, BOX 199, 242 22 Horby, Sweden.

ARMITAGE SHANKS - "25 Golden Showers" CD/ 66:47.
Sterling collection of singles '92 - '97 from these ramshackle Garage Punk Londoners, who are back in business, and in the words of stalwart Record Label boss Ian Damaged *"look poised to teach a few of the fuckin' nancy boy students a thing or two"* - and bloody a few of their noses along the way, we can only hope. Never shy about throwing in a cover version the SHANKS, and in amongst the plethora of rough 'n ready originals, their slop ass reprises include "One Chord Wonders" "Love in a Void "Orgasm Addict" a disturbing (and then slightly less disturbing!) "Are Friends Electric?" and fine CHELSEA anthem "Right To Work" - and tell me the original lines "I don't take drugs, and I don't drink beer" weren't an influence on the evolving DC Straight Edge scene in the early Eighties. You want the real deal sounds of Toe Rag Studios then take a leak in to the ARMITAGE SHANKS *(PC)*
DAMAGED GOODS, PO Box 671, London, E17 9GH, UK.

ARMY OF PONCH - "Vs. The Curse" CD/ 8:14.
This lot hail from Gainesville, Florida and have a lot in common with their friends over there in HOT WATER MUSIC, well actually a lot in common with NO IDEA label bands. They do the melodic punk thing pretty well and these three songs keep you interested. Strays to much down the path of niceness for me though and unless you are already sold on bands whom fit into the above bracket you might not appreciate this. *(FU)*
SABOT PRODUCTIONS, PO Box 28, Gainesville, FL 32602, USA.

ASSAULT - Self Titled CD/ 22:36.
Japans ASSAULT have been out and about playing quality thrash for a few years now. The 7" they did for `Partners In Crime Records` seemed to get them some good attention and then they went quiet again. Sadly a common thing for Japanese bands. I find it difficult to follow their scene and that's a shame as bands like ASSAULT are quality, make no mistake. This comes across like a blend of VARUKERS / POISON IDEA meets current heavy metallic bands like MIDNIGHT. Well sort of. If you like both sides of that coin you'll be into this. Great guitar sound and the production is pretty killer all round. You know when a Japanese band does something right they don't do it by halves. Well this lot are no exception. If they lived in Portland USA right now they'd be a lot bigger deal than they are presently. Sadly they are only going to be noticed by rabid Jap. fiends as HG Fact the label is difficult to track down over here. There's only six songs and just over twenty minutes of music but it's worth a look. *(FU)*
HG:FACT.

ASTRID OTO - Self Titled CD/ 25:43.
I'm getting a second chance at reviewing this disc, as I managed to lose the last copy I was sent, whilst walking along Brighton Seafront, in highly mysterious circumstances… as in it's a mystery to me where it went. Okay, let's do it again, for the first time… which it is for me, hearing this band that is. And WOW, my first reaction is that this is instantaneously combustible ear candy! Disc is a compilation of the bands 5 singles, released on a buncha different labels, and stacked together is formidable 18 track volley of tight snotty Punk explosions, like a raw modern day AVENGERS - a frantic momentum that don't slow at all, and is all over in a blur. *(PC)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

ASTROM, KRISTOFER & HIDDEN TRUCK - "Plastered Confessions" CD/ 21:56.
A, frankly, adorable collection of Alt. Country pop songs from Scandinavia. This appears to be some form of "best of" collection or a kind of sampler. The songs on here are culled from three of KRISTOFER'S albums; "Leaving Songs", "Northern Blues" and "Go Went Gone". The combination of pastoral sweetness and rootsy folk melodicism ensures that every song on this, all too short, collection is an absolute winner. In places it puts me in mind of a folkier, slightly perkier AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB or a less downbeat, Scandinavian answer to Leeds' very own DAKOTA SUITE. The songs here are heart-breakingly bleak. However, KRISTOFER'S sweet vocal melodies and the crisp arrangements leaven this nicely. Now all I need to do is get hold of the full-length records. *(TW)*
SIMBA, simbarecords@aol.com

AUDIO KOLLAPS - "Ultima Ratio" CD/ 42.53.
The front cover has three mohicaned punkers looking down on war torn streets - are they ready to fight or are they celebrating a victory over politicians and capitalism? Judging from AUDIO KOLLAPS lyrics they are intent on fighting to the end - fuck politicians and destroy capitalism. Mean and angry punks who are ready and waiting, unite and fight! Musically you wouldn't be wrong in thinking that they were locked in a room with say the first 15 releases on earache records - the 80's. Gruff vocals ala NAPALM DEATH, supersonic riffage in the vein of CARCASS, with enough tempo changes and quirky off beat riffage that would give SPAZZTIC BLUR a run for their money. You also get divine scorchers akin to TERRORIZER and a whipping from the more punk/hardcore bites of CONCRETE SOX or old metallic DISCHARGE inspired HERESY. So as someone might have said on a promo of the early earache stickers that donned various releases - a whirlwind of unrelenting manic hardcore punk, with the technical efficiency of an ardent metaller. *(MH)*
EPISTROPHY, PO Box 312, 30003, Hannover, Germany.

BABY LITTLE TABLETS - Self Titled CD/ 24:52.
A very COMETBUS style cover fronts this blistering disc of Japanese punk and roll. If their recording studio had been raided by the creativity police and the band threatened with death unless they make groundbreaking innovations in music they surely would have been killed…however, what this CD lacks in originality, it gains in passion, power and just an all round good vibe of a band making music they believe in. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, and this stuff is so unbroken that it even sounds brand new. *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

BAD TASTE / NET WEIGHT - Split 7".
Both bands are from the sunny climes of Mallorca, which is cool considering the island appears to be nothing more than a play ground for tourists. BAD TASTE play an all out fast thrash attack and could quite easily have been on SLAP A HAM or 625 etc. Fast, raw hardcore with a great sound. NET WEIGHT are equally as brutal, diving for the early RAW POWER, NEGAZIONE mayhem and igniting everything in their path. Fucking amazing to say the least. All the lyrics, bar one, are in Spanish - so I don't know what you guys are singing about. Check it out. *(MH)*
MALA RAZA, ap. 6037-50080, Zaragoza, Spain.

BANANAS, THE - "The First 10 Years… of" CD/ 71:16.
I love Plan-it-X Records. There's nothing better than a little square of track-packed, brightly coloured, three-minute pop songs from some undiscovered punk legends. Especially fruity ones. I've never heard of any bands Plan-it-X release but instantly wish I'd been there at all the gigs they played - or are still playing… I think this band are still alive and kicking! THE BANANAS sound epitomises the mid-90s flavour of Californian garagey pop-punk in Lookout!-style glory. A happy mix of DEAD MILKMEN, BLATZ and SCREECHING WEASEL, this 34-track summary of a band too lazy to break up is a fantastic treat. Tracks include "My Style is Banana Style", "Butt-in-ski" and the anthem, "I'm a Banana". If you're missing the days of "Can of Pork" pick this up - you will love it. *(HE)*
PLAN-IT-X, 5810 W Willis Rd, Georgetown, IN 47122, USA.

BAND OF ENDLESS NOISE, THE - Self Titled CD/ 47:59.
OK, a little look over the featured instrumentation has me frowning over such terms as Jewish harp, banjo, Lent flute, kalimba, Tibetan bowls and broken French horn. But hey, I'm fairly open-minded when it comes to music, so I dived on in, cranked it up and kicked back on the couch, promising to make it through three songs at least. Well, I did that, but I must've fallen asleep somewhere during track two. I awoke, groggy and confused. I put this CD to the bottom of the review pile and decided to deal with it at later date. So here I am, two more listens later and I don't know what to make of this, it's a very relaxing sound, with subtle accordion squeezes, electronic ambience and all kinds of bizarre instrumentation. Sometimes the song structures are a little more "rock" in design and these are the songs I can deal with a little more easily. Overall it is definitely "mood music", although from a personal perspective, I'm not sure I have access to the right one in my repertoire of available moods. Alas, this for me is as interesting as most of the crap on Kranky or Constellation records… a lot of people like this stuff, I'm not a lot of people. *(DS)*
ANTENA KRZYKU, PO Box 74, 50-211, Wroclaw36, Poland.

BARBS, THE - "Massive Crush" CDS/ 7:24.
Shitty promo CD-R of a record so bad my cat just vomited all over the kitchen floor upon hearing Amy Casey's totally fucking ridiculous vocals. What this band lacks in talent, they more than don't make up for in originality. If you could hear what I hear right now, you'd be hitting yourself about the face with a hammer that has rusty nails cellotaped to it. This band, and their PR agency, think they're punk - but then this band and their PR agency obviously don't know fuck all about jack shit - or his friends. This CD single is an insult to music, an abomination of the utmost. I hope this band fail in their "let's be famous" careers. Camden Cunts. *(MD)*
IMPRESSIVE (ha ha!) PR, London (surprise, surprise), UK.

BAREFOOT - "Only Souvenirs" CD/ 32:18.
This album is incredible, a real upbeat blast of poppy punk rock which you can't help but love. Very accomplished in every department, this has no flaws, it's just classy, sing-a-long, foot tapping, super-melodic rock that sounds just too good to be true! The vocals are incredible, bringing to mind a less-dramatic SHUDDER TO THINK, but backed with super hook-filled and uplifting songs. Well, I'm amazed at just how great this sounds from start to finish. Seriously, this is one enjoyable collection of songs with a nice mix of tempos and tunes that just won't leave your head. Funny thing is, I wasn't into their demo at all, but there is no denying what a superb CD this is and it's one to buy… take my word for it. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

BEERZONE - "British Street Punk" CD/ 64:31.
This is my first encounter with BEERZONE… I guess it could've waited a little longer as this CD is bad! Comedy street punk without the comic class of say PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES and without the musical prowess of, say ARGY BARGY. Plodding, simplistic without much fire in the belly. Lyrics are sooo bad, I've had to turn it down as there are other people in the house and I don't want them to think I'm listening to this for my own personal pleasure! Hell, I ain't no music snob, I'm quite happy to blast out a bit of oi! / street-punk every now and again, I love it! But this CD holds no interest for me on any level, they're having fun, they look mean as hell… but this is dumb music for dumber people, awful. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!

BELVEDERE / DOWNWAY - "Hometown Advantage" Split CD/ 35:19.
A split CD, from two Canadian punk outfits. Both bands plough pretty similar furrows, skirting the boundaries between pop punk and melodic hardcore like they were two sets of guitar-wielding tightrope walkers. First up are DOWNWAY who throw a little emo and early '80s metal into their mix. It's all very competently done but it isn't setting my world alight. BELVEDERE, on the other hand, is another proposition entirely. Their contributions to this split are tight and focused, mixing jazzy time signatures with metallic riffs and ultra-melodic vocal harmonies. Making this split worth picking up for their contribution alone. *(TW)*
SESSIONS, 60 Old El Pueblo Road, Scotts Valley, CA 95066, USA.

BEN GRIMM - "Retro" CD/ 61:37.
This is like old GREEN DAY, meets old SCREECHING WEASEL, meets DESCENDENTS and ALL (especially the kick-ass bass lines which sound very Alvarez-tastic) to make one gem of a pop-punk record, and if that isn't enough to sway you, it even features BORIS THE SPRINKLER guy Rev. Norb on it which pretty much means you have to buy it. Seriously, great stuff with a lot of great influences worn on its sleeve, but it is the sleeve of a brand new shirt they have tailored themselves. Again, I can't stress enough how enjoyable the bass lines are on this disc! After the fourteen listed tracks, there are even more songs to keep you going, although by track twenty, it did start to drag a little bit. Still, you can't fault the music, even if there is a little too much of it for my liking. It's just

a case of how you can even have too much of a good thing. *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

BENNY - "Our True Intent is All for Your Delight" CD/ 29:55
Daft lads. Seems BENNY are cranking out their tunes with a greasy ease these days as this new album is pretty hot on the heels of their debut, and to it's credit shows a nice little progression in a short time. Listening to this is almost like hopping aboard a dandy little machine that transports you back to the early 90s of punk rock, when bands on both sides of the Atlantic were playing catchy pop punk with silly little ditties nestling in amongst it all - bear in mind this was back before punk rock became co-opted by PR agencies and bands so earnest they could play at a wake. BENNY cram their punk with fun like a half-starved fatty at a free buffet but at the same time they play great little pop-punk songs that genuinely sound good. Of course be aware that any minute you could be plunged into into a demented amalgam of "Kumbyyah Me Lord" and "No Limits" but hey, live a little. And if they're playing near you, grab some cheap beer, swing down and heckle them - they're a band that deserve your sharp-witted best. *(RR)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, Beds., SG19 2WB, UK.

BENTON FALLS - "Guilt Beats Hate" CD/ 41:43.
BENTON FALLS rule. BENTON FALLS are an "emo" band. Get the fuck over it. In all honesty, this band embodies everything that is worthwhile about that, much maligned, genre of punk rock. They're passionate, plaintive, fragile in places, bombastic in others, the songs are dissonant and discordant yet melodic and heartfelt with not a cheesy 80's hair-metal riff in sight. What more do you want? Okay, sonically they owe a considerable debt to BRAID but this is far from slavish imitation. They've taken the format that was established on "Frame and Canvas", polished it, tweaked for a new decade and upped the emotional ante. This is a pretty bleak record (hey, I'm a pretty bleak guy!), as the title would seem to indicate, but it never feels like hard work. The bleakness is often softened by some gorgeously melodic guitar work. Which isn't to say that this album doesn't rock the fuck out. It's definitely more ostensibly "rock" than their previous work. At times, it has an intensity on a par with, say, SMALL BROWN BIKE, combined with moments of delicacy, which bring to mind ELLIOT SMITH. Sure, there'll be members of the Punk / HC elite who turn their nose up at this because it is "emo" and it doesn't pretend to be anything else but if you like honest, inventive, heartfelt rock and roll this record should be right up your street. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to have a good cry (so *that's* what they call it nowadays, huh? - Monk!). *(TW)*
DEEP ELM, Post Box 36939 Charlotte NC 28236, USA.

BEYOND 93 - "Would You Give Up On The World?" CD/ 17:33.
Really nice pop-punk here with all the hooks, harmonies, melodies and magnificence that you'd want from such a release, plus some really captivating cover art as well. It's nothing musically innovative, but it is definitely a band carving out their own route on a well-trod pathway instead of just following where others have gone before them. Like the TEEN IDOLS meets THE ATARIS whilst THE TRAVOLTAS can't go unmentioned. A great pop-punk release. *(DM)*
www.beyond93.com

BLACK EYES - Self Titled CD/ 31:43.
Ah, Dischord. Now most people who know me will know of my predilection for angular post-hardcore / math rock from DC but this is just beyond the pale. It starts out well with the polyrhythmic lo-fi rumbling of the first track, bringing to mind FUGAZI's more recent output or Q AND NOT U's first record but it's all down hill from there. As this record displays a vocal style more reminiscent of THE GOONS or MONTY PYTHON than JAWBOX or DISMEMBERMENT PLAN. Musically these guys really have something but, by God, the vocals are hard fucking work. *(TW)*
DISCHORD, 3819 Beecher Street NW Washington, DC 20007, USA.

BLACK SOUL CHOIR - "Cardinal EP" CD/ 22:10.
Shame about the shitty ass production because BLACK SOUL CHOIR crank out some damn righteous sounding DC inspired post-punk on this brief five-track CD. Hints of FUGAZI, ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT and MAKE UP can be heard amongst the lo-fi static sound and in all, this leaves you both wanting more and wandering just how massive this band could sound with some money to spend in the studio. Still, left as it is, this is a neat releases that warrants further investigation so do it. *(JP)*
INIT, PO Box 3432, Mankato, MN 56002, USA.

BLACKTOP CADENCE, THE - "Chemistry For Changing Times" CD/ 43:24.
This is an old record, dating back to 1997 (or was it '96?) featuring members of HOT WATER MUSIC, and a lady named Heather Parker, that has finally been properly re-released. It really is a band that epitomised the direction that "emo" was going in at that time - less screamy chaos, and more "Deep Elm-esque", jazzy, plinky-plonky "post-hardcore"...I think this is a good record, it is no doubt depressing, almost the musical interpretation of a bleak British winter, and sort of like early ELLIOT meets early HOT WATER MUSIC without the power that makes HWM so obviously a punk rock band and not an "emo rock" band. This record is more on the emo side, but it shines through with atmospheric and original ideas, like the cello on "Sinker", for example. That works very well indeed. This album is definitely one for both HWM completists and mid-ninties emo fans alike. *(MD)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

BLANK FIGHT, THE - "House Band Feud" CD/ 23:17
As I read it in the sleeve notes, and concisely translate to you, this band were formed out of a joke 'feud' with their Punk House neighbours, only in typically slack Punker fashion, the other houses didn't get it together, but THE BLANK FIGHT managed a tour and a demo tape. Not the mind-blowing sounds du jour, but these songs are a rough-cut brand of P-Rock that you might associate with (early) HWM, AGAINST ME! ANN BERETTA, and the singer slurs in a Tim Armstrong style. Okay Music, and I'll confess to having a soft spot for bands that promote cycling. Except QUEEN, most fucking definitely except QUEEN, who are my most despised band - *EVER (PC)*
PLAN-IT-X, 5810 W. Willis, Georgetown, IN 47122-9117, USA

BLOCKO - Self Titled CD/ 42:01.
Ah yes, the merry men of BLOCKO - three big skinheads that you wouldn't dare fuck with. Hah! And finally they get an album out. It was quite a struggle for them if my mind serves me right, they went to the US to record, it all got a bit too tight, then the guy's computer crashed and he lost one of their songs (!!!!), then they had to come home and just spend 6 months stressed to fuck. I can understand that, I would just want to get it done and dusted the day after recording... but anyway, with seeminlgly the whole world against them, the record is finally out and it was, of course, worth the wait. Like an amalgamation of HOOTON 3 CAR's and BROCCOLI's first albums, BLOCKO are the epitome of that mid-90's melodic UK punk rock sound. And it's just awesome that they're keeping it alive by revelling in its greatness. Mr Nij is a grade-A songwriter, and the rest of the band have the sound down to a tee - melodic, hook-laden guitars spewing their filth over little Mate's punchy drumming. You know the score... I know Frankie Stubbs of LEATHERFACE is a fan of this band, and quite rightly so as well... Definitely one of the best UK punk rock albums of 2003, and the great packaging really gives the whole thing a truly complete feel. Heh. *(MD)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK.

BLOODTHIRSTY LOVERS, THE - Self Titled CD/ 42:03.
On trendy French Kiss (owned by the bassist from LES SAVY FAV), THE BLOODTHIRSTY LOVERS play electronic indie with 80's male vocals, keyboards, fuzzy guitar and the occasional trip hop beat. Song titles like "Telepathic", "Sonic letter to Sara Jean" and "Datapunk" give a flavour of their sound, which, sadly, does not grab. *(HE)*
FRENCHKISS, 111 East 14th Street, Suite 229, New York, NY 10003, USA.

BREAKING PANGAEA - "Phoenix" CD/ 21:51.
So, I picked this CD up from my pile, looked at the sleeve, looked at the label and thought; "More metallic hardcore SLAYER-riff wankathons." How wrong was I? Very. What we have here is an almost textbook outbreak of what passes for "emo" in NME / Kerrang and, to be honest, it's not bad at all. Sounding very much like a hybrid of RIVAL SCHOOLS / FAR / JIMMY EAT WORLD (although more like the former two than the latter) it's all very pleasant sounding. So, whilst I wouldn't have searched it out and bought it I certainly wouldn't switch it off if someone put it on my stereo. *(TW)*
EQUAL VISION, PO Box 14, Hudson NY 12534, USA.

BRIEFS, THE - "Off The Charts" CD/ 27:05.
Superb old-school sounding snotty and poppy punk rock from Seattle. Funny lyrics, sing-a-long vocals and simple but effective kick-ass music make this an awesome piece of nothing you haven't heard before that is still worth hearing because it's so damn good. *(DM)*
BITZCORE, PO Box 30, 41 07 D-20324, Hamburg, Germany

BRIGGS, THE - "Numbers" CD/ 40:16.
Probably the best band on Disaster since SMOGTOWN. Fuckin' A1 old school "street punk" meets old school LA punk. About a thousand times more sincere than DROPKICK TURKEYS. *(MD)*
DISASTER, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, USA.

BRIGHT EYES - "Every Day and Every Night" CDEP/ 22:51.
This frighteningly brilliant EP includes five tracks - each of them worlds of frustrated, circular, despairing lyrics set to electric guitars and the occasional keyboards, samples, organ and piano. Conor Oberst is a chilling and bleak poet with fragile vocals that occasionally sound like an emo Gordon Gano from the VIOLENT FEMMES. The sleepy opener "A line allows progress, a circle does not" describes a crumbling lifestyle that goes nowhere, with piano accompaniment, it includes lyrics like "You try to find some source of light, try to name one thing you like - you used to have such a longer list, and light you never had to look for it." Track two, "A perfect sonnet", is more energetic, but far more cheerless, about the autumn of a relationship with Conor wailing "I believe that lovers should be tied together and thrown ito the ocean in the worst of weather and left there to drown in their innocence". Worse still, "On my way to work", Conor sees a graveyard and obsesses about his unstable end and wonders why he keeps going - to the sound of a mellow, melancholy guitar and pedal steel dreamlike soundtrack. "A new arrangement" is lost at sea, musically outstanding with semi-acoustic guitar, violins, samples and truly miserable lyrics. The CD ends with "Neely O'Hara", a track about realising you're not who you thought you were, set to a beat, with snippets of conversation and keyboards. The BRIGHT EYES copyright line is "Bedrooms, bedrooms and spiders" - it sums up perfectly the introspective, dark and bitter style of an outstanding artist. Amazing, unconventional and upsetting all in one go. *(HE)*
SADDLE CREEK, PO Box 34254, London, NW5 3XU, UK.

BROKEN FAMILY BAND, THE - "Cold Water Songs" CD/ 40:56.
Pretty much traditional country music in style, but with some incredible guitar work, almost flamenco/classical at times and a wicked, not to mention clever, sense of humour. These guys are like the second coming with songs that you can't help but sing along to, and a spirit that will make the hardest of hearts feel good. More than just country music, more than a comedy act, these guys are deadly serious at what they do and that's apparent in the masterpieces they create. From the up-tempo, *"Don't leave that woman unattended"* with its bouncy bass line and foot-stomping qualities, to the comedic-yet-poignant *"Hitting women"*, this album is pure class from start to finish. One of those albums that they invented the repeat button for. With pedal steel guitars, organ, accordion and piano, the sound is rich in variation and despite it's traditional country sound, you get the feeling there is a respectful piss-take to the genre throughout. For me, the lyrics are the thing that really makes this an amazing disc, clever, funny, bizarre and moving, all at once. If you're not opposed to a little country and you have a sense of humour then this is one CD you should own. A friend said they reminded him of the JAYHAWKS… what more could you want? A classic. *(DS)*
LABEL?

BULLET OF DIPLOMACY - "We Are The Rascal Multitude" CD 21:14.
Angular, politicised punk rock from Fracture's very own "political correspondent" and sometime ACADEMY MORTICIAN, Dan McKee. Drawing their musical influences from the likes of NOMEANSNO and THE MINUTE MEN and their lyrical inspiration from Dan's distaste for the current geo-political climate BOD deliver a heady musical stew of jazzy time changes, taught, punchy basslines, crisp guitar lines and righteous rage. A timely dose of what punk should be about. Although, the last song does sound like SPANDAU BALLET doing sixth form agit pop. Sorry. *(TW)*
WHO KILLED CULTURE?, 86 Kelsey Lane, Balsall Common, Coventry, CV7 7GT, UK.

BULLET UNION - Self Titled 7".
There's a reason why bands like BULLET UNION get a record put out after their fourth gig. It's because they're a fucking good band. Play as many gigs as you like, but if you're a lame band, don't expect the labels to come crawling in the dirt after you. But if by four gigs you're playing hardcore that's not only tight, but clever and scything at the same time, then you deserve a record. Of course BULLET UNION come to it all with years under their belt, members having served time in DEAD INSIDE and URSA amongst others and it shows because this is hardcore loaded with intelligent structures and built with layers of rhythms and emotions. It drives along with fragmented chords complimenting the twisting rhythms, but never losing sight of the punchy rock that embraces it.

There's even moments (such as the instrumental break in the midst of the sublimely titled "Stay Indie, Don't Be a Hater") that roll along smoothly with clean guitars and the unnerving atmosphere of an outtake from "Daydream Nation" before the guitar carve a clean slice through them again. First release, two tracks, all great. *(RR)*
JEALOUS, PO Box 321, Leeds, LS6 3YT, UK

BURY THE LIVING - "Bathed In Blood And Climbing Over The Dead" 7".
6 songs of raw noisy hardcore. The recording isn't the greatest in places, but I don't know if that's got to do with too much feed back or they are crap - being the optimist I'll go with the former. Anyway, they are fast, raw and have an old 80's feel. Their lyrics seem to have been written post 9/11 bombings, as they are anti nationalistic, condemning war and are not surprised America was attacked - yes they are an American band. Good 7", but not essential. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

CAPTAIN EVERYTHING! - "It's Not Rocket Science" CD 29:31.
The second album from Household Name Records' skate punk, court jesters is a strong body of work that is let down by an oddly muted production job. All the key CE ingredients are present, however; 100mph guitar lines, solid, driving bass and spazzy off-kilter drumming, allied to some really touching and insightful lyricism. Actually whilst reading the lyric sheet I found my self longing for the band to play some of the songs a bit "straighter". I can't help but feel that if they dropped the comedy delivery, which, in fairness is one of the things that makes them such a great live band, I think the quality of the songs would shine through a bit better. *(TW)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, UK.

CAREER SUICIDE - Self Titled 7".
First Henk brings us the STRUNG UP 7" and now this! CAREER SUICIDE are seriously good. This sounds like GANG GREEN on "Pre-school" but with a catchier guitar sound. Relentless from beginning to end. If you like old US hardcore then you'll go nuts for this, or if you're just into fast and snotty punk. The artwork is ace as well. Nuns with guns. Just a shame they didn`t include a lyric sheet. I suggest you do your best to get hold of this. I now have to get my hands on their LP. Great. *(FU)*
KANGAROO.

CARRIE NATIONS - Self Titled CD/ 28:01.
Athens, Georgia 4 piece give us some quirky stripped down tuneful, heartfelt numbers that to my ragged ears possess a JAWBREAKER-esque rawness, with a dash of jerky XTC simplicity. Song themes are predominantly about improving your personal freedom, which I'm not about to argue with. *(PC)*
PLAN-IT-X.

CATARACT - "Great Days Of Vengeance" CD / 40:54.
SxE kids around about 1991 discovered metal and for a lot of them, there was no turning back. This lot were obviously well into metal when they were growing up and took that route. I like my chugging death metal I have to be honest and this lot are pretty competent at what they do with lots of eerie guitar solo's and the like and plenty of double bass drumming, chugging breakdowns and the like. The funny thing is, with a lot of these bands, they are so obsessed with "The Straight Edge" but never write songs about it. All of them thank "the SxE" in their thanks list, and one even thanks Liverpool football club, pretty odd coming from a band who hail from Czech. Anyways you get a lot of lyrics about not bowing down to the beast and taking your life back, etc. Pretty tried and tested stuff and generic. It's all laid out really nicely and the packaging is nice. This is solid for this style and I did like it, but the problem I have with a lot of this stuff is if they ain't putting forth a message (politica1, SxE, animal rights, whatever) as such and copy metal to such a degree why am I going to buy this when I can pick up an old ENTOMBED / MORBID ANGEL CD for half the price and twice the quality? *(SM)*
LIFEFORCE.

CAUGHT IN THE HEADLIGHTS - "The Last Time We Tried" CD/ 30:17.
Piss weak indie rock dressed up as post-hardcore. For students only. *(JP)*
LABEL?

CERBERUS / SEETHE - Split CD/ 21:34.
Nice touch to see each band take it in turns on this CD rather than having 3 tracks from one followed by 3 tracks from t'other. SEETHE really remind me of 'Justice For All' era METALLICA but with a much more evil sounding vocalist. They have that total Florida death metal/San Francisco thrash thing right down, and the intro to 'Exhumed Justice' is a total metal classic. CERBERUS are very much in the same ballpark but with a much more highly strung vocal style not dissimilar to TOM ARAYA which is especially noticeable when he holds the notes. Enter wailing guitars ala OBITUARY and some serious SLAYER style riffage. Both bands shred and have truly mastered the sounds of their forefathers. *(SM)*.
RIVERS RECORDINGS, pa.rivers@virgin.net

CIVIL DEFENSE - Self Titled CD/ 21:27.
"I can't stand it, it's all bullshit, all around me, it's just ignorance. This whole thing has changed, and not for the better, we're gonna speak our minds, instead of pretending it doesn't matter, cause now we've had enough, of insincere bands and kids, of all these bands religious skits, of 15 dollar hardcore shows, of all these fashion shows, thugs and gangsters terrorizing kids, shit talking scenesters and their gossiping, sermons in our music, and big money on the door, that's not what its about, and we don't want it any more." I couldn't 'sell' you this CD any better myself. *(SM)*.
STRIVING FOR TOGETHERNESS (can't find an address!)

CLAMBAKE - "Gator In The Pool" CD/ 20:38.
With their stripped bare sinister swamp surf-o-billy manifestations this UK combo of Andy and Nick Barker knock out haunting dark Rock'n'Roll that's reminiscent in spirit and sound to Dutch duo LO-FI, both outfits pushing the extreme on the adage that less is more. And I likes it *(PC)*
GRINGO, PO Box 3904, Clacton-On-Sea, CO15 5TF, UK.

CLAQUE - Self Titled CD/ 30:49.
Starts with some meaningful spoken word from a quietly spoken women who suddenly erupts, when the music does, to screams and demands. She's backed up by an erratic, angular and needly sounding band. She screams "So small! Oh so small! So small! I've got so many questions!" and there's the odd violin in there too. This is spiky and the sort of music sorely missed from the scene these days. Bring it back! More ups and downs in hardcore! *(HE)*
BIG DEAL, c/o Jer Reid, 41 Killermont Road, Glasgow, G61 2JB, UK.

COMMON ENEMY - "Outsiders" CD/ 20:45.
This should be on Beer City or East Bay Menace. Total snotty and sarcastic punk rock from the word go. Reminds me of a mix of THE PIST meets STRYCHNINE. Pretty good gear and a good sneering vocalist. Which is of utmost importance for a band trying to pull this stuff off. The songs are never over the top fast thrash but bounce along at a fair old rate and keep you interested. "British Invasion" is funny, saying how the kids in the US are only interested in UK bands from 82. There are a few songs slagging off drugs, which came as a surprise considering the music and delivery. Actually the lyrics are pretty great. No intellectual genius here but they just seem to have sussed things out and put it in terms that are straight forward and make sense. Unfortunately the artwork is pretty dire, but if you can get past that you're in for a decent punk ride. *(MH)*
SPINE PUNCH MUSIC.

COMRADES - "No Escape" CD/ 9:37.
Ah, COMRADES what can you say? One of the most under-rated bands knocking about. They have been delivering quality evil grind for years. Mixing a whole heap of influences into their sound from the likes of RINGWORM, INFEST and DISRUPT/ENT in the vocals dept. All comes together to my ears. Really pissed off vocals coming over a barrage of noise coming up with gems such as "a fist to the face, a kick in the teeth. Comrades raid you auto park and make a fuckin' mess!!". Classic. This lot are not as straightforward as you might think and definitely have a nod of appreciation for 80`s HC which set competent them apart from the crowd. Add to that they all wear ice hockey masks or balaclavas, are nailed to the X, and have a singer called "fuckin bastard aka pimp daddy" you have to want to hear this band. Top notch stuff, just wish they'd come over and play in the UK. *(FU)*
SOA.

CRASH CARTEL - "Pyramid Theories" CDEP/ 04:44.
"Colesey" who did the cover art (*art?!*) is the master of his own oppression, according to the sleeve, which is um, not interesting and a typically languid in-joke. Anyway, CRASH CARTEL is a good name for a fairly dirge-filled grunge act. Both tracks sound vaguely like Bleach-era NIRVANA, which is good, and tinges of THERAPY? and the likes of COMPULSION are in there too. Hurrah for the grunge come back. *(HE)*
ROSA.

CRAVING - "Fans Will Shit Their Pants" CD/ 54:33.
I saw this German outfit at the TRUSTfest in Bremen during the summer, and with a few cans of Becks pumping around in my system, they made plenty of impact. At the time I thought they carved out heavy twisted compositions akin to JESUS LIZARD, and to hear them on disc reaffirms that. And as sterile an environment as a compact disc recording can be, they retain heaps of their live energy and combustion. This disc unfortunately arrived at Camp Craven minus the back sleeve, which I think mighta held vital information, because it appears to compile 2 albums, one from 2000, and the most recent from 2002. *(PC)*
SCENE POLICE, www.scenepolice.de

CRIATURA - "Gente Sin Fabricas" LP.
This LP is nothing short of a work of art. The graphics and layout remind me of something Coalition records would put out. The front cover has an eye looking though barbed wire, helicopters and trees, really impressive to say the least. Other pieces of artwork accompany this, in the form of booklets etc and lyrics sheets, in both Spanish (or is it Portuguese?) and English. Their lyrics are of a personal, but political nature. Musically it's a mixed bag of bones. Mainly it reminds me of SPITBOY mixed with FUN PEOPLE, but with jazzy discordant twists, just to throw you a curve ball when you get all complacent. I couldn't let it pass without mentioning the improvising sound of say FUGAZI. which all in all makes for a really interesting release. Not my usual bag, but cool for that Sunday afternoon with a cup of tea and the kids running around. *(MH)*
MALARAZA, Apdo. 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, Spain.

CRUDE - "Immortality" CD/ 30:01.
Rather snazzy little Cd I got here in my hands. CRUDE are a band who have been around a little while and this release is actually a "best of " from their old LP's. They have done three other full lengths, but seeing as they're from Japan next to no-one gets to here them due to terrible distribution on Japanese punk in the UK. Anyway, what you get here is sterling stuff and will appeal to those with a fixation for all things Jap. Total aggro from the word go and reminds me of stuff like FORWARD and GAUZE which is definitely a good thing. The songs are well organised and there is actually structure to the chaos, which tends to be the case of Japanese bands. You get some great Jap/English translations for song titles such as "The is no light at a loss" and "No light Soul of State" which are par for the course in this genre. If you like it powerful, thrashy and Japanese you can't go wrong with this. Limited to 300 on CD in a smart looking Acetate cover. Typical of Deranged records. Hopefully there's more availability of the vinyl so people can actually get to hear this! *(FU)*
DERANGED.

CURLUPANDDIE - "We May Be Through With The Past..." CD/ 13:24.
I have to be honest. I thought this was going to be a load of rubbish. I know I shouldn't pre-judge a band but sometimes you just can't avoid it. Shame on me as I was proven wrong and thankfully so. What you get here are six tracks of pissed of metallic Hardcore which definitely lends an ear to bands like BOTCH. They don't follow the trend completely though and keep things varied and interesting throughout. Nice gravel vocals throughout and chunky bass action from the word go. A band that obviously can play and although they try to hide it in the noise they ain`t fooling me. There are also a few noise bits here and there which are pretty much par for the course these days with bands of this ilk. They are alright though and didn't annoy me. Oh yah and this CD was produced by Kurt from CONVERGE if that gets your pulse racing. Nice song titles on here with "I Hate Almost Every Person I come Into Contact With" being my personal fave. The lyrics are all about dealing with life and emotions and how hard it is. Not really my cup of tea but they pull it off better than most. The package looks nice with some nice cartoon graphics running throughout. All in all a decent disc and kept me interested. *(FU)*
STATUS, PO Box 1300, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358, U$A.

DA SKYWALKERS - "The End of a Chapter... Start of a New" CD/ 43:38.
Boring hardcore with shitty vocals, no personality and the odd bit of ska. Nice inlay booklet though. I've even lost the press-sheet propaganda so can't even reel off parrot fashion the supposed good

things about them that have been written for me. *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME.

DAGDA / SCATHA - Split 7".
Pretty cool and special 7" if you ask me, where THE DAGDA (Ireland) and SCATHA (Scotland) celebrate the ethos of the pre-christian pagan world of their forefathers and sisters. Though, seen through the eyes of more modern anti-establishment people on their quest to enlighten their lives in their search of a just and free society. THE DAGDA are heavy weights from over here and their live set is an experience to behold. I yet to see people unmoved by their harsh metallic crust (such a bastard tern, but it suits the purpose), that is heavy, powerful and dirge fuelled doom. Just think of FROM ASHES RISE, JENIGER, NEUROSIS etc and I'm sure you'll get the picture. SCATHA on the flip, are not as heavy, but brutal none the less. I'm sure most of you that are into the DIY hardcore (crust, blah, blah) scenes will be aware of them as they've already released a load of records. With this song carrying on from them. Slight DISCHARGE meets AMEBIX vibe that will only satisfy your currently wet appetite. Cool 7" and excellent fold out sleeve, which is a collaboration of 3 labels hard work and determination for all things DIY. *(MH)*
CRIME SCENE, 82 Colston Street, Box 13, Bristol, BS1 5BB, UK.

DAMAGE DEPOSIT - "Do Damage" 7".
Been wanting to hear DAMAGE DEPOSIT due to Felix Von Havoc being their vocalist. This 7", as I was hoping, contains 8 blasts of incendiary hardcore that is in your face - whether you like it or not. As times have gone by Felix has been moving away from the typical crust style that he did when he was in DESTROY, all those years ago and this new stuff carries on the fast approach of his predecessor CODE 13. Brutally raw vocals, where he just spits out his anger and contempt for the way some people have accepted hardcore and are trying to take it away from it's original goals. I totally agree with him for sure. Raw hardcore, fast sloppy drumming and breakneck riffage are the order of the day. There's even some moshy breakdowns thrown in here and there. Off course there's a real 80's old school (the real old school) vibe to it and there's touches of old NEGATIVE APPRAOCH, BLACK FLAG, NECROS, NEOS coupled with the modern torch bearers such as DS 13 (rip), VITAMIN X, TEAR IT UP etc. DAMAGE DEPOSIT attack the jocks, consumerism, macho ass-holes and have a pro DIY rage in their hearts. Love the cover, it depicts an angry mob attacking, what I can only assume as capital hill (?). Definitely a 7" worth your hard eamed pennies and this copy is on red vinyl no less - ace. *(MH)*
HAVOC, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN55408, USA.

DAY OF THE FIGHT / WEISER - Split CD/ 22:50.
WEISER are fairly predictable emo/indie rock, they sound like so many bands it's unfunny. They kinda meander along, every once in awhile breaking out with some nice power riffing, but there are no surprises here or anything that hasn't been done to death in recent years. DOTF fair a little better, up-tempo and soaring melodic punk rock, a little like SOUTHPAW and very clean sounding. Again, there are a lot of bands playing this style at present and it's hard to make an impact on a flooded genre, but these guys almost get there, despite not really offering anything new. Not a bad split by any means, but I've been saturated with these styles so much of late and I'm getting real bored of it all. The fact that this has been one of the last things that I have reviewed this issue probably doesn't help matters. This just felt like a damn long 23 minutes... on first, second, third and fourth listens. DAY OF THE FIGHT are by far the winners of this bout. *(DS)*
RED CRAYON, 16 Swanmore Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, P033 2TF, UK.

DAYLIGHT - "The Dead End Kids" CD/ 22:35.
Urgh, get this fucking turd from my shoe. While I like some of this, I'm just wondering who they want to be? Heading for the big lights of MTV? I don't know. Quite of mixture of really mellow soulful singing and nice guitar work, that is fucking awful and I felt like I wanted to be sick a couple of times. For gods sake OASIS or TRAVIS have more balls. Sure they seem to be influenced by BOY SETS FIRE, but the B.S.F. stuff I have is incredible and only they can do it. In between all this pukey JIMMY EAT WORLD garbage is some REFUSED / CONVERGE style metal mayhem - but it gets all lost. Their lyrics are weird too, they are trying to come across as being intellectual or clever, but end up sounding stupid. Having said that, I love the front cover, especially the sun part. *(MH)*
WINTER.

DEAD LETTER DEPT - "Anthology UK" CD/ 58:41.
This collection of all DEAD LETTER DEPT's early pop-punk tracks "the end of the beginning" certainly does have its moments if you are looking for pop-punk in a sort of early GREEN DAY / APERS / SCREECHING WEASEL kind of vein, but then again, there are also moments when it just sounds like a substandard pale imitation of those bands, sometimes almost exactly mimicking one of their songs. This was recorded when they were kids though to be fair, and in it's proper context, it's pretty cool. But as an outsider, not a long-term fan of the band looking for early demos and the like, I'm not sure if it's really worth bothering with. One for collectors only I feel. *(DM)*
NOO NOO, www.noonoorecords.com

DEAD MEADOW - "Shivering King and Others" CD/ 62:05
Stoned. As. Fuck. I wish I could say more but there is no more to allay you with. DEAD MEADOW have always been stoned, like whitey-inducing stoned, but on "Shivering King" they're at that level where you're slumped on the sofa thinking you're Jesus and the cat is your only disciple. And then you put some music on, or you think you have, well you can hear something anyway; it's rumbling and slurring and rolling like a wave of warm tar. That's DEAD MEADOW you're hearing right there. *(RR)*
MATADOR

DEAD OR AMERICAN - "Subdivide" CDEP/ 11:04.
This is brilliant. It's like FUGAZI and NO MEANS NO, getting together and then finding themselves a bit of a dark poppy edge and creating some tremendous complex and melodic music that rocks out at the same time as it makes you tap your foot like a clown. A totally unique sound and something I would love to hear a lot more of! *(DM)*
PREDESTINATION, www.deadoramerican.com

DEAD SILENT DAYS - "Striving For Perfection" CD/ 40:38.
Wow. A fantastic bunch of songs from these Scandinavians. Bringing to mind the best of BEESEWAX's heady melodicism, allied to the sweeping guitar dynamics of the late great AFGHAN WHIGS. One moment these songs throb and surge with urgency and bile, the next they're swooning with a beautifully understated melancholy. A truly classy record. *(TW)*
MY FAVOURITE TOY.

DEADFALL - Self Titled 7".
I really wanted to hear this baby, now that I've heard it I can say that's it's definitely the 7" of the year for me so far. 8 songs of rip roaring, snotty as fuck hardcore. They take the best elements of NECROS, MINOR THREAT, RIPCORD and DRI, without sounding exactly like any of them - but having touches here and there. The recording quality is fucking unreal and just adds to their potent hardcore songs, yeah, fucking memorable hardcore songs, while being fast and in your face. DEADFALL make me want to jump in the air, do scissor kicks, dive on to my bed and run around like a rabid hyena. I defy anyone to beat this. They sing about religion, peoples reliance and greed for too much money, along with some other scene related things. That cover, man the artwork is just briliant - even the ads in MRR with it looking so good. What's more there's even a cool sticker with the same artwork, I'll definitely be sticking it somewhere for all to see. So folks, everything about this 7" is awesome, make sure you get it. Snotty old school hardcore to the max - love it. *(MH)*
CONTROLLED BY PLAGUE / DEADFALL, PO Box 22641, San Francisco, CA 94122, USA.

DEADLINE - "Back for More" CD/ 39:30.
Upbeat UK street punk with the rarity of having strong, female vocals at the helm. In a "genre" so dominated by macho imagery, stance and lyrical content, it makes for a breath of fresh air I tell ya. A powerful production really helps their cause and some good guitar work really keeps things interesting. *"Last night"* is a cool song and this finishes with a cover of *"Sheena is a punk rocker"*. I am actually surprised at how much I have grown to like this CD... I thought it'd suck, I was wrong. *(DS)*
Captain OI!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

DEADSURE - "From Your Head To Your Sacrum" CDEP/ 21:01.
This is 6 tracks of pulverising dark, pissed off 90's emo hardcore fronted by Ryan Scott previously of SPARKMARKER. There is definitely an element of TWELVE HOUR TURN in the sound, and it's not surprising No Idea picked up on them to be honest. The sinsiter bassy feel to DEADSURE's sound also actually reminds me of early ISIS as well, although not as metallically harsh. I think DEADSURE could end up being one of those really big bands, like BLOOD BROTHERS. *(MD)*
NO IDEA.

DESTRUCTION MADE SIMPLE - "Terror Stricken Youth" CD/ 39:22.
Reminds me slightly of JUGHEAD'S REVENGE, but only if JUGHEAD'S were jamming with NO MEANS NO and were five times as talented as they really are because this shit is *good*! Interesting, innovative, songs change their tempos quicker than an incontinent changes their underwear. Hardcore to harder-core and back again this blisters through tightly performed intense tunes with kick-ass basslines, screams and growls to die for and thrashing guitars. Tremendous. *(DM)*
AF, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA, 15213, USA.

DEVILSKINS, THE - "Radio Zombie Rock" CD/ 35:02.
Tuneful, upbeat and sussed skinhead punk rock from Italy with solid tunes and smart lyrics, what more can you expect from this genre? Certainly makes British bands like BEERZONE sound tired and pathetic. Even their forages into ska are OK, coming off very 2-Tone sounding. *(DS)*
OI! STRIKE, Paolo Petralia Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALY.

DILUTE - "Grape Blueprints Pour Spinach Olive Grape" CD/ 48:24.
No. This lengthy noodling math rock would be fine as instrumentalism, if a little boring and repetitive, but the, albeit rare, vocals sound like Yoda on codeine. I think maybe you're weird if this is your cup of tea. Sorry, and they tried to bribe me with a free cent. *(HE)*
54° 40' OR FIGHT! PO Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610, USA.

DIPLOMATS OF SOLID SOUND, THE - "Let's Cool One" CD/ 34:06.
12tracks of, at a stab, BOOKER T & THE MG'S styled Rockin' Soul, that's driven along in grooving fashion by a massive throbbing (Hammond) organ. I can cope with 2 or 3 of these easy listening instrumentals at a time. But even I have my limits, and get an itch for more frenetic sounds. One day though, when my bones are weaker, and I'm reduced to sitting in an armchair, slipper clad, and straining to make out the blurred shapes on the TV screen... I'll stick this on and listen to it all the way through, with my hearing aid up to one over the eight. I promise *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2115, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

DISCIPLINE - "Rejects Of Society" CD/ 54:40.
Dutch street punk with a nice rock n roll edge to the sound, adding melody to thug anthems makes for a much better listening experience in my opinion. This compilation takes in tracks from three of their full length albums and a couple of EPs. Tuneful street punk, nice guitar work, thug vocals that can carry a melody, singalongs and very enjoyable all round. The CD is rounded off with three covers... *"Saturday's Heroes"* by The BUSINESS, *"Astro Zombies"* by The MISFITS and a superb rendition of *"Prison Bound"* by SOCIAL DISTORTION. All done extremely well and with the utmost respect. If you're a fan of the TKO sound, or street-punk in general, then you need this. Have to say, they really rip shreds out of most of the UK bands playing this style of music these days, in fact they give most of the American bands a run for their money too. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN OI!

DISCONTENT - "Discontent" CD/ 30:20.
This rocks! Grade A premium rock n roll punk, killer tunes and a rockin' swagger with gruff vocals and plenty of classic rock n roll guitar leads. Fans of The HUNNS and SMOGTOWN will appreciate this, it was produced by Duane Peters of the US BOMBS, but this is far better than anything that band have done in awhile. A few of the songs veer towards that US street punk style, but for the most part, this just zips along at a beer-guzzling pace and songs like "The shakes" and "Got a girl" are just semi-classics. Crank it up loud and wash the bullshit away, as I said, this rocks. In fact it's prompted me to dig out my old HUMPERS 7"s for a little wobble and weave down memory alley. *(DS)*
DISASTER, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, USA.

DISORDER - "Were Still Here" CD/ 27:38.
...and still here they are! It must be over twenty years since I first heard them on the first Punk and Disorderly LP with their track 'Complete Disorder'. Its my humble opinion that they had a big hand in starting the whole thrash punk thing with a cider fuelled venom that I was not quite prepared for then! Today? This CD? On a level with anything they've done before, especially the early stuff and undoubtedly still 'Complete Disorder'! I think Taf is the only original member but he's kept them going and still kept it political and uncompromising. One of the most influential UK punk bands if we did but know it. Nine tracks for the thrash cider punks. *(GS)*
HG FACT, 105 Nakano Shinbashi M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, Japan.

DOPAMINE - "The Time It Takes To Go" CDEP/ 17:30.
I have a firmly held belief, some may even call it a conviction, that bands like DOPAMINE exist purely to piss me off. There is nothing remotely special about them, they just clutter up the lower reaches of fairly decent bills and eagerly await A&R showcases. They deliver a thin gruel of lowest common denominator rock that manages to be very "now" without having anything worthwhile to say. All this is, is a gutless amalgam of LOST PROPHETS and FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND. In short DOPAMINE are a great reason to hate being Welsh. *(TW)*
YOU AND WHOSE ARMY,

DOUGHBOYS - "La Majeure 1987" 7".
A worthy piece of history here from Aston Tuneage, with a trio of demo songs from rocking Canadian Eighties mainstays THE DOUGHBOYS that were recorded at "La Majeure" a few months before they hit Studio Victor, Montreal to lay down their mighty fine debut platter "Whatever". All 3 songs on this heavy weight slab of colour vinyl would be re-recorded for the album. I really dug this band back then, but haven't listened to their music in a long while. Guess what - this 7" has been getting repeated spins ever since I got it. Guitar soaked Rocking Punk to exuberant sandpaper raw melodies - lovely. D-BOYS singer / guitarist John Kastner is currently in ALL SYSTEMS GO! *(PC)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

DOWN IN FLAMES - "Start The Fucking Fire" 7".
Hmmm, so this 7" is still doing the rounds, it's being out a couple of years at least - I bought it when it first came out, they since released a 12" on 625 and as far as I'm aware they have split up. Although I have various pressings of it, it's cool to get this white vinyl version. When I first heard it, it blew me away and continues to do so - fucking ace 7" that it is. 10 songs of fast incendiary hardcore, harking back to the days of old - especially DC and the FLEX YOUR HEAD comp LP. Great lyrics to boot. Surely anyone who care must have already got this? Well if not and you like the above mentioned LP, DS13, ETA, etc. then this a must for you. If you're a record collector and need it on white vinyl then you probably know the address already. No matter what, an ace 7". *(MH)*
GLOOM, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212, USA.

DRIVE TIL MORNING - s/t CD/ 31:32
A solo effort (with full band) from a one-time part-time member of POP UNKNOWN. That's irrelevant. DRIVE TIL MORNING are so frail they're beautiful. Consider the late ELLIOTT SMITH in the cool midnight air of a blue western highway, the myriad stars above, the warm tarmac beneath and the crackle of a nearby campfire. It's bare-bones country music for the jaded post-emo generation, populated with sparse guitars, pianos, strings and pedal steel. It's the slow creaking of a rocking chair on the warped boards of a porch, watching dusk gather over distant peaks and a storm cloud drift overhead. *(RR)*
DEEP ELM

DROPDEAD / TOTALITAR - Split CD/ 29:09.
Two legendary hardcore bands join together for an explosive CD. Although this is a brilliant CD and I have a lot of both bands previous releases, it did take me a while to get into these songs - but once I did I was hooked. DROPDEAD, still screaming after all these years, no matter how much I love them they have never seemed to create their earlier and totally legendary stuff. But they still continue to put up a good fight. Their contribution is 6 songs of pure rage, screamed vocals, buzzing guitar riffage and adrenalin inducing anger. They certainly have not mellowed an ounce in their old age (fuck, I make them sound like the Rolling Stones). Bob continues to scream about oppression of mankind and mankind's oppression of earth. Their songs were recorded fall 2001 and early 2002, so hopefully we'll get some new stuff soonish. I heard they our touring over here soon, any truth in that? The other legendary band to fight off oppression with DROPDEAD, is TOTALITAR who are from Sweden. After a long and brutal back catalogue of brutal releases there is certainly no let up from them. They continue to play traditional Scandinavian dis-core d-beat and have a dose to NO SECURITY, DISCARD, etc. in their bones. But TOTALITAR have enough interesting hooks off their own to keep things interesting and away from the totally generic beat that it has become. Cool lyrics to boot. Anyway, this CD won me over in the end and now I can't stop playing it. It's also available on vinyl for us plastic freaks out there. Cool graphics and concept. *(MH)*
PRANK, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, USA.

DROPDEAD / UNHOLY GRAVE - Split 7".
5 DROPDEAD songs, 4 from their 2nd LP, recorded live on their 89/99 European tour. Originally meant to be released on another label, but only seeing the light of day now thanks to MCR. What can I saw, they are totally raw and I think really only for us die-hard DROPDEAD fans. Includes lyrics and some writings. All their stuff is still available on their Armageddon label, so check that out and hear the songs the way they blew the shit out of me years ago. After a million splits UNHOLY GRAVE are still churning out their brand of Japanese grind core. Fast crazy old DROPDEAD styled blastbeats, with more moshy chunky breakdowns (that are over before you know it). Good lyrics and if you already like them then you'll dig this. Mad stuff. *(MH)*
MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, Japan.

DROPSCIENCE, THE - "Dies Tonight" CD/47:26.
Fusing JUNE OF 44's flowing, experimental sound, the sharp angular noise of Albini's SHELLAC and the rock n'roll strut of the HOT SNAKES, THE DROPSCIENCE are a top quality, ultra-quirky bunch of post-punks from San Diego. Sure, there's nothing on here that the combined musicians of Touch & Go Records haven't been perfecting for years, but this is still a solid chunk of scratchy post-punk that is crammed full of pulsating rhythms that make you wanna dance just as much as they make you want to ponder, scratch your chin and marvel at how clever this is all is. *(JP)*
HCNL, PO BOX 36997, Indianapolis, IN 46236 USA.

D.S.B - "Battle into Invisible Zone" 7".
This lot seem to be getting a few releases under their belts one after the other. I have the 7" they did on 'Partners in Crime' and wasn't overly impressed. I have to say the same about this. It's got all the classic qualities of Japanese punk. Consistently fast and with loads of buzz saw guitars. A singer who tries to song over the top of the produced chaos. It certainly fits the bill and does so rather well. I just don't think I'd play it all that often. If you love Japanese punk you'll most likely enjoy this. *(FU)*
KANGAROO.

DUGONG - "Hat Danko" CD/ 40:46.
I know it has been said before, about how *"there must be something in the water 'round Wakefield way"* because of the plethora of incredible bands and musicians that just seem to grow on trees in that lovely town. I even had this romantic notion that there must be some amazing music teacher in the high school there that inspires and brings out the creativity in his / her young students… that'd make a cool story. But let's just face it, it's not romantic, they're just a bunch of talented bastards, simple as that. The first time I witnessed the DUGONG live experience was at a badly attended show in the backroom of a ropey old pub in Tottenham. I was coloured impressed, say blown away even. They were amazing. Their debut CD was so good it hurt, they instantly became a fave band and when I was part of the London based *Rude To Stare* collective I managed to blag them onto a couple of bills, they always pulled out the stops, even with broken limbs and too much alcohol flowing through their veins. This latest album took its time in coming, those in the know waited with baited breath and unadulterated excitement as to what one of the country's finest bands were going to deliver. The first thing that hits you upon initial listens is the way the band have cleaned up their sound, the guitar is cleaner, the vocals up front in the mix and instead of being rallied out as before, this shows Matt really singing from the heart and showcasing a heavy dose of emotional strain. In *"Tonight this is perfect"* the vocals convey such a depth of sincerity, you almost expect Matt to breakdown mid-song, it truly is one of the most moving songs I have heard… ever. But this is no one song album, each composition oozes class, thought and faultless execution. A major progression from the last album and a lot slower, but losing none of their identity. It may surprise you at first, but before you know it, you'll be struggling to push the eject button. *(DS)*
BOMBED OUT, PO Box 17, Leeds, LS8 1UP, UK.

EARL SHILTON - "Two Rooms (Full of Insects)" CD/ 37.38
Erm, not sure what is going on here. Some strange sludge action. Makes me think of BOLT THROWER doing BATHORY through SLEEP's equipment. Sounds weird? Well you ain't wrong there. It has the potential to be good but gets far to twiddly for my liking. It really is one of those odd CD's where you don't know whether to love or hate it. I'm certain of one thing. I hate it. *(FU)*
LABEL?

EASTERN STAR - "Bitter Ending" CD/ 27:56.
Buncha Czech lads who by the looks of it have traded in straight ahead Hardcore fury for flaming eight-balls of RocknRoll ala ZEKE, MOTORHEAD, early 'COPTERS, and a passion for old fast cars, tattoos, and guitar flailing theatrics. If the SEX MANIACS ever get to Prague, I strongly suggest someone stick EASTERN STAR on the bill *(PC)*
HOPEWELL.

ELEKTROCUTION, THE - "Vagina Dentata" CD/ 15:29.
After the absolute rubbish CD's I've just been listening to, and compelled to write negative shit about, this 3" CD by a buncha dirty wild and crazy Northern French cats sounds like fuckin' Stravinsky. I mean, it's not that special, but the way they trash away at their instruments, and shout and holler, and throw in some swinging Vox farfisa organ grind… well it's kinda cleansing. Music to get you dancing on tables at 2am, and that can't be a bad thing *(PC)*
EMERGENCE, 29 Rue Le Nostre, 76000, Rouen, France.

ELLIOTT - "Song in the Air" CD/ 49:15
I really wanted to like this because (a) everyone else said it sounded like a bad DEPECHE MODE and (b) I shouldn't be robbed of my love. And I tried, I really fucking tried - I want you to know that. But after I tried for the tenth time this has been collecting dust. Okay, so it's not too much like DEPECHE MODE - it's more like fairly average shoegazing material. There's sparks of what made "False Cathedrals" and "US Songs" so fucking good, but they're few and far between in amongst the washes of digital delay and reverb overload. I wish someone had robbed their van and just left them with guitars and amps, then this might have been better. In fairness, I play it in the dark at night and it helps to stop me to sonnambulating. *(RR)*
REVELATION

ENABLERS, THE - "Sweet Fuck All" CD/ 20:03.
Wow, what a drinking record this is, I tell ya! Mid-paced, nice 'n' thick guitars and almost slurred, gruff vocals which bring to mind many fine bands including HOT WATER MUSIC, The GOTO-HELLS, late 80's SOCIAL DISTORTION and even Bruce Springsteen! The songs, which at times are fairly slow, have a real tendency to get into your head, ESPECIALLY after a drink or seven… there's an almost country vibe going on, not musically as such, more in the melancholy "I was wrong and I'm sorry" feel. Definitely a record penned by a broken hearted romantic, no cheese, no bullshit, just raw emotion and exposed nerve honesty. Six songs, no filler, just a perfect twenty minutes of painful regret, loss and self-doubt. The guitars are heavy, the drums pounding and the vocals beer-soaked. At times simplistic, but always perfect and there is a lot of feeling in the band's sound. Not exactly a party record, but definitely one to reach for when the beer has done its job and the whiskey is up next. Depressing? Well maybe, but sometimes that's good ya know? Nicely presented too, with the usual Monk Dave obsessive-compulsive design quality. *(DS)*
NEWEST INDUSTRY, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK.

ENDLESS STRUGGLE - "Till The End" CD/ 45:52.
If you like the UNSEEN, CASUALTIES, THE VIRUS or any of the current crop of American bands sporting mohawks, tattoos and leather jackets then you'll like this lot. Full on punk rock with a real hard edge and a 'not bad' cover of GBH's 'City Babies Revenge', to round off the thirteen tracks. The lyrics are not overly political and that's a good thing in some ways as I feel the lyrics to 'Payback' about September 11th are a bit wide of my views on the matter. A good package though and it's on ANTI FLAG's own label I think. *(GS)*
A-F RECORDS, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA.

EXIT, THE - "New Beat" CD/ 36:29.
This has been out for a while and they've played a pretty low-key UK tour this year already, but this is still worth a mention. Opener *"Worthless"* is a quality song with a real late 70s new wave style meets THE PARASITES, pretty straight-forward and hook-laden. An entire album of this would have been perfectly acceptable, but these guys have a wide sound spectrum, from off-kilter JAWBOX type riffs to an atmospheric, reverb-heavy surfy guitar style, that many folks have likened to The POLICE. This is an adventurous album, but there is a cohesive-ness throughout that manages to ensure the disc, as a whole, is a complete listening experience, and not a patchy collection of half-assed ideas. As for the POLICE observation, in my opinion *"Trapped"* sounds more like an early STING number ("An Englishman in New York" - a classic song), white reggae, with a pop sentiment… it shouldn't really work, but it does with an infectious bass-line that hits home immediately. A varied album of creative and daring rock that stands up to repeated listens. The funny thing is, I used to work at a record company and we pressed this album up for Some Records, I heard it and

thought *"wow, we're putting out a good record at last!"* only to find out that it wasn't being licensed in the UK / Europe… I thought that was a mistake at the time and was very vocal about it. Seems someone finally saw sense to let people outside of the USA have opportunity to check out this fine band. I was gutted I missed them live, I was told all about it by the local promoter 24 hours after they'd played… I wasn't a happy bunny. Apparently they were amazing and I can believe that. *(DS)*
SOME, 51 MacDougal Street, #458, NEW YORK, NY 10012, USA.

FABULOUS DISASTER - "Panty Raid!" CD/ 33:09.
Super catchy, toe-tappin' punk pop from California, by four punk ladeez with attitude. This has production from Fat Mike and FABULOUS DISASTER could easily be the next MUFFS or DONNAS. Tracks like "Bi-Polar" and "My Addiction" ("Nothing's better than… CANDY AND DECAY!!!" - my sentiments exactly!) stand them in good stead. I thought this would be dreadful because the cover was so punk rock scary, but was very pleasantly surprised. I like that! *(HE)*
PINK AND BLACK, PO Box 190516, San Francisco, CA 94119, USA.

FEAR BEFORE THE MARCH OF FLAMES - "Odd How People Shake" CD / 41:08.
Why did I get this? More tiresome emo metal. You know the crack. Good aggro bit getting you all worked up only to be ruined by Mr. Whinge and his indie rock troupe. Boring to say the least. The lyrics are about broken relationships and lost dreams, etc. the usual drivel. Oh and they may have tried to hide it but I caught the "thanks to god" on the insert. Yeah, very clever you muppets. Please don't tour. Please don't make any more records. Just go to church, it's safe there and you don't have to think for yourself. *(FU)*
RISE RECORDS, www.jesusenteringfromtherear.com

FEDERATION X - "X Patriot" CD/ 32:48.
These guys create an imposing wall of sound, that's most definitely not easy to pigeonhole in a strict Garage Rock format, bearing in mind their Record Label's heritage. And after a few tracks - five to be exact - it's apparent FED X consist of highly talented musicians, who have a pension for laborious Hard Rock. I think I'd find certain elements of these guy's record collections quite offensive. Nope, this is not doing it for me. Steve Albini's the producer, and I'm craving a blast of "Sonic Reducer" to get me back on course *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2115, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

FIGHT, THE - "Home Is Where The Hate Is" CDEP/ 20:18.
Hmmm, isn't there a band like this in every town in the UK? School kids playing average girl fronted punk rock? Remember when Bill Clinton had "an error of judgement"? Well I think the same thing has happened to Fat Mike here. I mean, it's not like total rubbish, but all the money that's gone into these kids, it's just insane. Flown out to the US, recorded at The Blasting Room (it sounds about as good as if they'd recorded at The Whitehouse, Weston-Super-Mare)… And now they're on MCA!!! Musically, I guess it's okay if you like the idea of a DONNAS / AVENGERS hybrid, but the singer adds a really awful James Hetfield "uhya" and "zuya" after every single fucking word, and by god it grates on your nerves by the time the distorted rap (that's right, RAP!) comes about in the last song. Plus, they're all from Birmingham, which means they come fully equipped with the worst accent in the UK, haha… fuckers. *(MD)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS.

FINE BEFORE YOU CAME - "It All Started In Malibu" CD/ 24:32.
Cribbing their guitar dynamics from the likes of BRAID, KEROSENE 454 and SPY VERUS SPY, FINE BEFORE YOU CAME make a racket vaguely reminiscent of what passed for "emo" at around the turn of the century. This is a good thing. Songs race off the starting blocks like Linford Christie on crack before twisting and turning in as many directions as possible. Others drift in slowly and stealthily before exploding into life only to ebb away moments later. A lot of fun. *(TW)*
GREEN, Riviera Mugnai 32/35137, Padova, Italy.

FIREAPPLE RED - Self Titled CD/ 31:53.
This is sort of a more hardcore and intense STRUNG OUT, like how STRUNG OUT would have been if they hadn't wanted to be a metal band and continued being a punk rock band instead. That said, at times, it loses its cool hardcore sensibility and goes a bit unintentionally nu-metal, but even those bits, surprisingly, seem to work. It's fast, it's heavy, there's a lot of screaming and cool guitars, plus melodic bits with harmonies, like a mixing together of both "Less Talk More Rock" and "Today's Empires Tomorrow's Ashes" era PROPAGHANDI which works really well. Plus the CD has a good production sound and comes in a strange red jewel case so all in all, yeah, check it out. *(DM)*
GOOD CLEAN FUN, 48 Cardigan Road, Haverfordwest, SA61 2QN, UK.

FLAMINGO 50 / LACK OF REASON - Split CD/ 25:45.
This is the strangest thing, I just finished listening to the GRAMPUS 8 CD not twenty minutes ago and this is the first thing I grabbed from the review pile upon my return to review central. So with the classic "Midwinter" still bouncing around in my head the sound of FLAMINGO 50 just carries on that contemporary Liverpool indie rock vibe with ease. I don't like to generalise, but there is a distinct Liverpool indie-rock sound at present, and I like it. FLAMINGO 50 are 2 gals and a guy, playing hard-edged indie punk rock, the vocals are slightly off key in the same way as GRAMPUS 8, but that's not a criticism, in fact the opposite. The six songs they display here are melodic agit-pop rockers, laced with attitude and with a feisty female perspective. For the most part fairly pacey and mixing pop sentiment, with a heavier/harder edge to perfection. Really impressive and thoroughly enjoyable I have to say. LACK OF REASON are from France and are also pretty good, the female vocals are a little more dramatic due to the accent, but the music is upbeat and tuneful with some nice guitar work. The thing is, halfway through their songs I tend to skip back to the FLAMINGO 50 tracks as they have a little more of what I like in my music. Two very good bands that work well together and this split is only available through the band so do the right thing and ask about the cost at: flamingo50@flamingo50.com cuz this is well worth adding to the collection. What a fine split. *(DS)*
FLAMINGO 50, 23a Lancaster Avenue, Liverpool, L17 3AY, UK.

FLETCHER - "My Revenge" CD/ 34:09.
Some of my friends have ridiculed my liking of this band, maybe it's because of the label they're on, maybe it's because they just never fucking listened to them. I have to admit, before I'd heard them I had written them off as yet another crappy UK pop punk band. But I was wrong, seriously fucking wrong. In the space of two months they have become one of my favourite UK bands, after three live shows, hanging out with them and now this album… these guys rule. Main singer Chris has one of the best voices around right now, full of passion, grit and melody. The other members are no slouches either, tight as a kitten's hymen and capable of playing songs that get into your system and refuse to leave. For the most part this album is mid-paced with song structures that at first appear simple, but that's down to the cohesion this well-rehearsed band harbours. FLETCHER are focused, as one, and the result has a dynamic that so many UK bands don't have. I can't state how great an album I believe this to be, I have played it to death and even upon playing it once more time as I attempt to write this review, I find myself distracted. I just cranked it up, cracked open a cold one and let the songs flow over me. This is a band I have a lot of time for, I just think they maybe aligned themselves to a certain scene that a lot of folks have contempt, or at least disinterest for. I hate that crap, good music is good music regardless, and great music should rise above such pathetic boundary allegiances. A fantastic record, give it a chance, I think you'll come away surprised. I know I did and thank god I gave it a chance, as they really are a damn fine band. *(DS)*
DECK CHEESE, Ground Floor, 111 St Pancras Way, London, NW1 0RD, UK.

FM KNIVES - "Useless and Modern" CD/ 36:05.
Mighty catchy poppy Punk that had my feet tapping from the off, with songs that are melody dripping, tight and urgent, resonating to real cool time REAL KIDS and BUZZCOCKS vibrations. Song of the moment has to be "20/20" driven by pumping riffs, and a way hooky chorus. Love it like that! "Useless and Modern"… hardly, this is my idea of great Poppy Punk, not some half assed LAGWAGON jumping bunch of fakers. Can recommend the FM KNIVES to cure impending Autumnal Blues - they sure helped with mine *(PC)*
BROKEN REKIDS, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402, USA.

FOGDONKEY - "Das Fogdonkey" CD/ 24:53.
With a name like that you'd expect the band to suck caramel coloured diarrhoea from the butt of a haemorrhoid inflicted Nolan sister, well… you wouldn't be wrong. What do you get when you cross RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS with a semi funky, nu metal rock sound? Absolute crapola, that's what. Too much trying to cover all the bases and leaving your arse out in the open methinks. This is painful, I'm gonna go stick a brick up my fanny for a little light relief. *(DS)*
GOGOFIASCO, 15 Church Street, Taffs Well, CF15 7PG, UK.

FOUR SQUARE - "Three Chords… One Capo" CD/ 34:02.
Bummer Rock. It's the latest thing. Post-JIMMY EAT WORLD, college rock toss. "Emo" that owes more to THE REMBRANTS and HOOTIE AND THE BLOWFISH than RITES OF SPRING. If your idea of a good time involves HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS or BRYAN ADAMS then this is the b(l)and for you. And you deserve them. *(TW)*
BAD TASTE, Box 1243, 221 05 Lund, Sweden.

FREAKS UNION - "The Beginning Of The End" CD/ 29:42.
This is good! I'm tempted to almost say very good as the songs on this CD ebb and flow through the many 'styles' of punk that we love to try and label bands with! In fact this band flippin' annoy me as I'm desperate to compare them and give all you Fracture fans a label for them! Sadly at this late hour I can't manage that so you'll just have to accept that THE FREAKS UNION are truly a bunch of freaks as they can't be labelled and put in any one category! Political / personal lyrics that work really well with the music making this great CD from a great band. *(GS)*
TOWN CLOCK, 39 Station Road, Thirsk, YO7 1QH, UK.

FRIENDS OF ED / DRINK DRIVER AGAINST MOTHERS - Split CD / 24:03.
I missed a gig in town the other week and my mates all came back saying how the 1st band on (FRIENDS OF ED) were really great. Well after putting this on I'm kicking myself for not making the effort. Straight up fast thrashy punk rock. Take a healthy dose of FIG 4.0 and mix it with that old Revelation Records sound and you'll be getting close. Pretty tight and full of energy from the outset. Have to keep my eye on this lot. DDAM fill up the rest of the CD and have a similar approach, which again is a nice surprise. The only thing I wasn't so keen on was the occasional slip into Fat Wreck territory on the guitars. Assuming this lot are young I'll let them off. Both bands have good lyrics and it`s great to see the UK producing some interesting and fresh new bands. *(FU)*
BEST FOOT FORWARD.

FUKTIFINO - "The Fast Effective Relief EP" CDEP/ 16:47.
Clumsy and unpleasant. Badly written and badly played. This really was a chore to listen to. Like when you hear old tapes of fifth form punk bands. This band have nothing of interest to say and no interesting way of expressing themselves. *(TW)*
Fuktifino@hotmail.com

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND - "Four Ways to Scream Your Name" CDEP / 15:38.
Why Me? Another poseur band trying to score some sort of "street cred" from Fracture. Well you ain't fooling this reviewer. This four track CD is not taking any chances at all and goes for almost all the current trendy sub-genres in Punk / HC. There's the angry metal edged bit, the occasional NYC gang style back up, but the over-riding theme is fucking emo! A hefty nod towards FARSIDE and CHAMBERLAIN and all things that were new in the mid-90`s. I also got a press sheet, as obviously I'm incapable of making my own mind up about bands (or a lazy journo' in London). I got quotes from NME and KERRAPP saying how great this band are. The label tells me they are "A-listed" for various radio stations. Being A-listed definitely means they are sucking on the cock of the evil ones in my book. No band gets that treatment unless large sums of money or hype are being thrown around. Well or that they are genuinely good. They definitely are not the latter. Their website has a section called "street team" which is a term I do not understand. I think it's where the label sends kids millions of crappy promo flyers, etc. to hand out at "shows". In which case they surely can go fuck themselves. Try doing some graft yourselves. They have a song called "Kiss and Makeup" which shows that they're sensitive guys and in touch with their "emo"tions. No lyrics included for me to cry over unfortunately but I can hazard a guess as to what they might be. This is the sort of turd that almost anyone who's been around for more than five years in punk can see straight through. Trends come and go. Let's hope this lot just go. Oh yeah and to make things worse, I just found out this lot are Christians which is the final nail in the coffin for me. Guess that God is trendy these days though, so that could shift a few more units. Fools. *(FU)*
SANCTUARY ARTIST MANAGEMENT / HERO PR.

FURTHER - "Punk Rock Vampires" CD/ 46:44.
Like a bracing wind, this CD is fresh and makes you feel alive. FURTHER have tapped the currently popular reserves of melodic, guitar-centric post-grunge of bands like TRAIL OF DEAD and added variety, spice and small measures of punk rock. (That's small by Fracture standards, but in Fierce Panda terms, quite enough.) These four lads from Sydney have crossover appeal that other punkish rockers don't quite match - they've got stoopid names ("Dang Talent" on drums, "The Kid" on gui-

tar and vox), a tendency to mellow out and whisper, indulge in some noise, and sometimes to rock out loudly and with fierce energy! I like it best when they're rolling with the music in an ARCHERS OF LOAF type fashion, but there's enough burst and bloom on here for everyone. *(HE)*
FIERCE PANDA.

GALVINWILHELMMILLERQUARTET, THE - Self Titled CD / 27:42.
I had deep apprehensions about this CD due to the name. How wrong could I be. Total grind mayhem from the word go! This is actually a side project with one of the threesome hailing from AVULSION. Hard to believe that this is a side project seeing as though this is so damn tight and has time changes galore something you wouldn't think possible being that your main interests lie in other bands. This is like a battle between DISCORDANCE AXIS and CONVERGE with OLD MAN GLOOM on the sidelines. Relentless drumming, crazed guitars and ugly vocals all the way. The occasional down time for some atmospherics space things out nicely. There's five songs on here, each packed to the rafters with aggression. The song "Your God Is An Angry Drunk" being my favourite. Sadly there are no lyrics and the packaging is slim to say the least. The cover artwork is a picture of cockroaches crawling over an empty tin, which seems to be a recurring theme with a lot of bands these days. Good old cockroaches/insects. If you need a good dose of grind by a band on top of their game and you can secure a copy of this CD I really would. Merciless stuff. Let's hope that this isn't a total one off. *(FU)*
IMPATIENCE OR INDIFFERENCE.

GEOGRAPHY / FOXHOLE - Split CD/ 40:57.
I'm sorry - GEOGRAPHY play really dreadful out of tune emo rock. Lots of screams, which are more tuneful than the singing definitely, and some fairly rocking heavy guitars in places. FOXHOLE are slightly more interesting, with a growly emo meets rock n roll sound. Still, nothing amazing. *(HE)*
CHUMPIRE, PO Box 27, Annville, PA 17003-0027, USA.

GHOST MICE / SAW WEEL - Split CD/ 34:30.
The GHOST MICE played and stayed over the summer, on their DIY hitchiking tour around Europe, and not only did they play a great set that everyone loved, they were also super nice people. This band is two people that play like a one man band! Guitar, violin and sometimes mouth organ (oh, and tambourine on the floor, now I come to think of it). No plugging in, just totally acoustic. The songs are so great that it works really well. It's all very Plan-It-X (well hey, they do run that label!) and sounds maybe like a more folk-driven SISSIES, in terms of the vocals and song writing anyway. They also cover Cat Stevens' "Sing Out" which sounds totally great. SAW WHEEL is not as appealing, the vocals are gruff and the music is more banjo driven, maybe coming off like a more redneck RUMBLESEAT. Haha, that sounds so bad, it's not meant as an insult!!! It's not bad, I just like the punk inspired urgency of the GHOST MICE a lot more. *(MD)*
HILL BILLY STEW, PO Box 82625, San Diego, CA 92138-2625, USA.

GIVE UP THE GHOST - "Background Music" CD/ 26:24.
Now I know Hardcore in the year 2003 is purely a cosmetic movement, but sending another copy of this 3 year old album expecting another review just because some text changed on the front cover is pretty fucking stupid. *(SM)*
EQUAL VISION.

GIVEAMANAKICK - "Is It Okay to Be Loud, Jesus?" CD/ 31:41.
This exploded from the speakers like an overpacked firework, with bursts of heavy rock that drives along like a fully-laden downhill juggernaut. Yelped and screamed vocals career over the top of guitar riffs that deliver hefty blows and a drummer that's round the kit in a frenzy of fills and solid head-down 4-4 rhythms. All the more impressive then that this rib-punching noise is made by two people armed with only one drumkit and one guitar - a similar line-up to WINNEBAGO DEAL and not too far away in sound either with their fusing of heavy pummeling rock, incisive punk stabs and even a few dirty bluesy moments that must make for a fierce live performance. *(RR)*
www.giveamanakick.com

GIVING CHASE - "Nothing Ever Changes" CD/ 27:43.
GIVING CHASE are a vibrant band and an array of various sounds. This CD starts off with some heavy-duty MADBALL / NEGATIVE APPROACH rockers, which are awesome. Then they change paths and meander on a SAMIAM / PROPAGANDI trip, full of melodies and sweetly sung vocals. Though at times the jump back and forth and bounce all over the place. Their lyrics deal with the realities of life, but the words are not totally in black and white - read between the lines. So quite a lot going down there and I totally dig it. *(MH)*
JUMP START, PO Box 10296, State College, PA 16805, USA.

GONNA FALL HARD - Self Titled CD/ 14:12.
These guys are just fucking brilliant. GONNA FALL HARD are an explosive burst of incendiary hardcore to the max. There's no let up from start to finish. Feast your ears on their fast tunes, with whirlwind influences coming from the likes of ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, NEGAZIONE, RAW POWER, HERESY, ACCUSED, WxHxNx and a sonic burst of many other classic and modern sounds raging out of my speakers. Incredible vocals, that remind me of old Italian hardcore, surely fitting this modern Italian hardcore band. 11 songs threw at you in just over 14 minutes and each song great in it's own right. GONNA FALL DOWN piss over bands like DOWN IN FLAMES, HOLIER THAN THOU and you should make an effort to get this little disc. Cool lyrics dealing with the scene and more personal stuff. GONNA FALL HARD are an absolute must and some of the best Italian hardcore I've heard in years. *(MH)*
GREEN, Riviera Mugnai, 32 35100 Padova, Italy.

GRAVELTRAP - "Concrete and Udder Chaos" CD/ 47:41.
It's on Moon Ska. It's got "promo only" packaging. The first song's lead guitar is a complete rip off of "American Jesus" by BAD RELIGION - if BAD RELIGION were from Slough or Uxbridge or Milton Keynes, or some other dull middle class ghetto, that is. And… they've just started to play a kind of poppy, hooky, "is it gonna have a ska chorus?" BLINK 182 style song… I'm just not feeling this, if you get my drift… Shit band name, title and cover as well. Fake bastards! *(MD)*
MOON ASS.

GRAVY TRAIN - "Hello Doctor" CD/ 24:18.
OK, this is a good un, musically it's rap with that awful new-wave B52's style keyboard insanity as backing music… the music is definitely secondary here. At times I am reminded of *"Cookie Puss"* era BEASTIE BOYS but it's bad, it is really bad. But as I said, I'm sure that's the point as the lyrics… well, we are talking sex, sex, sex… mainly from a gay female perspective, but also some camp male action on the go-go. It's amusing, hell, even funny as hell in places… *"You made me gay"* is my personal stand out tune, *"Titties bounce"* is fun too, but jeez, talk about overkill. Maybe I'm sensitive (yeah, that's right ladies) or maybe I find all out sex, sex, sex dull?? That sounds bad, what I mean to say is, yes, sex is great, I love it, but I also like to go for walks, read some, think about the animals and spread my interests… ya know I don't walk around with a fucking rock-on day in day out… most of the time I'm as limp as recently deceased cat… it's not the only muscle that needs a work out, ya know what I'm saying? Anyways, this is sex all the way… the big problemo is… it's not sexy. But perhaps that's the point? You keep saying the word fuck until it becomes redundant as a shock word, you keep harping on about sex until you're anathematised and you feel very little about it, in any shock value way. That's all hey, hip, cool and with it… but you can call me a prude, I like to keep some things private and special. I liked the YEASTIE GIRLZ, but this is about 15 years too late to be held in the same regard. Oh, you may wanna go visit *www.rapbitches.com* to see whass'up. Whatever, if I want sexy music I'll dig out my old copy of the first few MADONNA videos… something for the weekend sir? Yeah, a little left to the imagination. Jeez, I'm so English! *(DS)*
KILL ROCK STARS, PMB 418, 120 NE State, Olympia, WA 98501, USA.

GREGOR SAMSA - Self Titled 27:36 CD/ 27:38.
Beautifully arranged, epic yet elegant rock. I don't know whether those in the know would call this "Post Rock" or "Slo-Core". Frankly, it doesn't matter what you call it, it's lovely. The boy / girl vocal arrangement brings to mind the work of LOW. Which is always a good thing but GREGOR SAMSA's arrangements are fair more lush and fleshed out than LOW'S. With three songs stretched out over just under thirty minutes this can hardly be described as punk rock but that is hardly a bad thing. *(TW)*
IODINE, 1085, Commonwealth Avenue, PMB 318, Boston, MA 02215, USA.

GRIMPLE - "Discography" CD / 35:22.
This is a band that I think are pretty much forgotten in the UK. A real shame I think as when I put this on the memories came flooding back. Around 1992 this lot along with QUINCY PUNX and STRYCHNINE and a whole heap of BEER CITY bands were playing some of the best music to drink to. On here you get some fast punk rock action played with a distinct "Bay Area" feel. It reeks of the whole Gilman scene and then some. For your money you get the "Up your Ass" LP, the 7" and the demo. Plus a video from a warehouse gig in`98. It's a high-octane ride through this CD. The songs have a serious side to them on the whole but are played in a way, where you just want to get off your head on white cider. For people out there who like to get trashed and stick two fingers up at the world, or those finding it difficult to remember 10 years after. A winner all round and if you like it punk, loud and obnoxious you should give this a spin. *(FU)*
PRANK.

GUITAR WOLF - "UFO Romantics" CD/ 40:13.
Jeez, been a hell of a long time since I got a release on Skydog, the French label who put out some classic obscurities in the latter part of The Seventies. Anyways, this Japanese trio are the most Rockinest looking RocknRollers around, with their greased back hair, razor sharp cheekbones, and shrink wrap tight black leather street wear. Cosmic Teds. On looks alone they get an A for Attitude. And they rate pretty highly in the music department too, with ramshackle jams that pay the dues to '77 Punk from the UK, USA, and Antipodes. The Aussie influences particularly cut through, and I dare say you'd find recordings of THE SAINTS, FUN THINGS, CHOSEN FEW and VICTIMS in the GW'S record collections, squeezed alongside KILLJOYS, EATER, HEARTBREAKERS, NERVOUS EATERS, DEAD BOYS, and the list goes on. Includes a Video for the title track with the guys getting intergalactic and zapping normal folks in to alien zombies. Far Out. You got it - this is a Blast. *(PC)*
LABEL?

HAPPENING, THE - "Shit Happens" CD / 28:01.
A strange little CD here. Japanese three piece playing poppy punk but with a real political edge. Great. The female vocals make it seem all nice and innocent but then you open the insert up and notice all the political sloganeering about whale hunting and the sex trade. Good to see bands like this taking their ideals to the fore. I can imagine this lot actually being really well liked by the people who follow Crackle and Snuffy Smile bands. There's also a big JAWBREAKER feel running through this! A slight power pop edge going on as well which is no bad thing. Shame the CD comes in a digipack, which pretty much consigns it to obscurity in any shop / distro. *(FU)*
THE HAPPENING,

HEARTACHES, THE - "Lunacy and Devastation" CD/ 36:27
Did the most recent BOMBSHELL ROCKS long player leave you dissatisfied, and yearning for the jubilant adrenaline fired Punk Rock of their previous 2 albums? Well, fear not THE HEARTACHES, upstarts from Belgium, are here to cure your blues, with a punchy slick mix that turns it on in all the right places. Not wanting to rain on their parade though, I still remember the bands these guys would no doubt trace their roots back to - bands that sung about tension and frustration as a reaction to the fucked up world around them, and really meant it. Whereas, when bands like THE HEARTACHES claim that they "Wanna Riot" the sentiment lacks any real conviction, and is just a rehash of a well worn cliché. Kerry Martinez (SHATTERED FAITH / US BOMBS) produces. *(PC)*
PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

HEROINES, THE - "Groupie" CD/ 36:55.
Actually this is pretty darn good. So the lyrics can be pretty bad, and there's some sexy band poses on the covers, but this garagey punk allows two girls and two guys from Germany to make a catchy-as-hell, powerful combination of L7 and THE DONNAS. Glossily produced and punk as fuck in a very glam way (like ROCK'N'ROLL!), THE HEROINES have toured Germany with bands like THE DICKIES and I'm sure we'll be hearing a lot more of them. *(HE)*
WOLVERINE, Kaiserswerther Str. 166, 40474 Dusseldorf, Germany.

HEX - "The Credit Of Not Caring" CD/ 70:29.
Ah, BIG BLACK. So many imitators, so few who ever came close to actually doing anything of worth. You can add Ayr's, HEX to that, ever expanding, list of hopefuls. Some people need to realise that if you're going to monkey around with big noise you've got to be as talented as Albini and co. to make it work. I'm sure it's great fun goofing around with a distortion pedal and a drum machine in your bedroom, in fact, I know it is, I did it when I was a teenager but you really shouldn't expect to actually sell that shit to people. It's like having a wank and trying to give the tissue to someone else to blow their nose in. It's just not polite. *(TW)*
MRW44, 28 Elm Row, Edinburgh, EH7 4RR, UK.

HI-TECH JET - "If You Take Anything" CD/ 25:00.
First off, I like this band and happen to think they rock live. They're also cool folks and I think they have one of the best vocalists in the UK. But I can't seem to really enjoy this CD. I recognise songs that I appreciate live and I think most of the seven songs here are quality tunes. But something is missing, I think that's the power and intensity of their live performance, the loud guitars are now sedate, the vocals are way too high in the mix when they have the power to fight alongside the guitars, and the back up vocals sound like they were over-dubbed well after the fact. Maybe I'm being overly harsh, I have a lot of time for this band, having booked them three times in the last year and know they have something special in the mix. I know they can produce a killer record, but maybe they just went into this a little prematurely and to be honest, this was recorded at Mushroom Studios and I don't think I've liked any of the recordings I've heard from that studio aside from the SUNFACTOR CD. I think the sound is sterile and sucks any powerful emotion sonically conveyed. But saying that, this is a good and promising first release for a young band who will kick ass on the next record I'm sure. All the facets are here, strong songs, big tunes and a lot of cool ideas. But the production has really wiped the blood from their sheath and sanitised the intensity I've witnessed this band unleash on stage. I feel bad, I'm a fan, I just found myself so disappointed with this CD and it's all because they got the wrong sound, they didn't get theirs and that's a shame. I just spoke to guitarist Mem at the SENSEFIELD show in London, he defends John Hannon and Mushroom studios and lies the blame with the mixing. It sounds as if the band are a little disappointed with the final product, that's a shame as they are a hardworking bunch and will get a great record out someday soon I'm sure. *(DS)*
IATDE.

HINT HINT - "Sex is Everything" CD/ 20:07.
I'm pretty disturbed by the cats having sex on the cover and the song called "Harry's Ass is a picnic" - yuck! Not a very nice picnic! Apparently this is electro punk, that is, confrontational spiky vocals and guitars accompanied by an electronic backbeat and occasional sample feistiness you can dance to. These guys have played with WIRE and PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES and so I imagine are quite big, despite my never hearing of them. It's a nice little six track of multi-layered zeitgeist fanciness. *(HE)*
COLD CRUSH, PO Box 348, Los Angeles, CA, 90078, USA.

HOLIER THAN THOU? - "The Riviera Sessions" CD.
This was a very welcome review item for me. I really rate the early stuff. This is a slight departure from their previous outings though and I'm a little disappointed to be honest. This lot seem to have gone for a more metal cross over feel than ever. There's still a big hardcore element to this record but it comes across like them trying to do AC/DC sometimes. That's not such a bad thing but I would rather they didn't. The opening track `50 ways to lose your liver` is a stormer and the MOTORHEAD cover of `Sex and Death` is a fine job. This CD is not up to the usual great standard of H.T.T? but it will do for now. As for the insert well loads of naff pictures of the band and no lyrics, which is a shame and pretty bad sleeve, art. However this is still better than most bands trying to be 80`s thrash. Now where's that 1 sided 12"? *(FU)*
DERANGED.

HOODS - "Prayer For Death" CD/ 21:41.
One of the tougher bands on the current Victory roster. HOODS fuse that smack-you-upside-the-head tough-guy sound with tormented bitter vocals that almost sound like OBITUARY if they'd actually slow down for a second. Imagine MERAUDER or FIRST BLOOD covering MADBALL and you're pretty close to the bruising power on display here. Lyrical subject matter includes fake crews, revenge, the 5-0 and drug addiction, and there are some nice METALLICA-esque 'clean' guitar intros also. Award for the song to trigger the most deadly dance floor goes to the track "I Own You" for its enormous chest-beating breakdown. Token quote: *"Walk down these streets of starvation and death, where mothers sell their pussies to feed their kids."* Heh. *(SM)*
VICTORY.

HOOKERS, THE - Self Titled CD/ 12:45.
Ex-MURDER CITY DEVILS crooner Spencer Moody gets down right dirty and raw on this debut from his new outfit, down from the Hollywood Hills and grinding their skinny dope addled bodies into broken glass, like good STOOGES should. 8 songs total that build up to BIRTHDAY PARTY styled dementia. *(PC)*
COLD CRUSH, PO Box 348, Hollywood, CA 9007, USA.

HOORAY FOR ME / PICKLED DICK - Split CD/ 20:42.
PICKLED DICK are fucking cool, speedy and upbeat pop punk with humour, and fuck do they remind me of the awesome SICKO. They hold their shit together well and the drumming is top notch. Their three tracks are nothing short of excellent. HOORAY FOR ME really didn't do anything for me - not terrible or anything - just lacklustre and dull when played alongside the superb PICKLED DICK songs. A definite game of two halves here my friends. *(DS)*
www.tshirtrecords.com

HOUSE ON FIRE - Self Titled 7" EP.
This is basically 5 out of the 6 tracks that were on their self titled, self released CDEP. Mine is hand numbered 70 out of 500, and it's on some lovely looking gray marble vinyl. It's a sweet package indeed and, luckily, "Bomb On The Plane" and "A#1 Jackass" are still on here. This band is over now, but I do know that BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT continue the PANTHRO / HOUSE ON FIRE tradition with pummelling, sometimes dark, punk rock that's maybe like a bleaker NAKED RAYGUN, and have even taken over some of these tracks into that new band. Brilliant stuff, but probably sold out by now. Bad luck, sucka. *(MD)*
1-2-3-4 GO!, 420 Wall Street, #206, Seattle, WA 98121, USA.

HUBCAP - "These Kids Are Weird" CD/ 70:01.
Anyone out there like or remember BRAINIAC? The death of their main-man Tim Taylor in '97 brought a horribly abrupt end to one of the greatest, most spazzy art-punk bands I've ever been lucky enough to witness. The material they were working on before the death look set to be their best yet and we were all, quite simply, robbed. What has all of this got to do with HUBCAP you might well ask. Well, if ever there was a band capable of picking up the baton dropped by Tim in that horrific car crash all those years ago it's these guys. They have the same weird sense of timing, the same unhinged sense of melody, that same ability to make punk rock sound so God damn strange they surly must be from another planet. *(JP)*
LABEL?

I EXCUSE - "Burn The Empty To The Ash" CD/ 30:32.
This is a band whose name I have heard crop up in punk rock circles for a while, so it was nice to get a copy of this album for review to see what all the fuss is about. Put simply, I EXCUSE fucking rock, with blistering guitars leading intense yet tuneful music sung with powerful shouted vocals. The production on this is just so nice, each song is so full of impact and presence and it's high velocity punk rock all the way in a sort of LEATHERFACE meets DILLINGER FOUR, and spazzes out into an uncontrollable awesomeness kind of way. A fantastic punk rock record. *(DM)*
NEWEST INDUSTRY, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK.

I EXCUSE - "...Is Dead" CD/ 29:34.
Well tickle me pink and call me "Tokyo Joe", it's another absolutely brilliant album from Japan's greatest punk rock band, I EXCUSE. It's LEATHERFACE gone snotty, in the best possible way. MRR recently said, *"this band makes me feel like the first time I heard DILLINGER 4"* - and seriously, who the fuck are we to argue with that? They jump from mid-paced melodic brilliance on tracks like "New Day Falling" to a much more "machine gun" approach on tracks like "Fire On The Opposite Bank" with a style and grace that only a band that really knows what the fuck it's on about can do. This record is totally amazing, and if you missed them in the UK this year (they toured with MANIFESTO JUKEBOX and WASTED) then it appears, my friend, they you're truly the joker in the pack and Punk Rock itself is laughing at you. That must feel really horrible. Heh. *(MD)*
SNUFFY SMILE, 4-1-16-201, Daita, Setgaya-Ku, Tokyo, 155-0033, Japan.

ICONS OF FILTH - "Nostradamnedus" CD/ 34:35.
Ok, this CD has been out a while now. But when I first found out that one of my favourite bands had got back together (do we even know if they really split up in the first place?), and were going to release a new LP I was full of a mixture of excitement, anticipation and fear. The latter being that they could release an LP that was shit and would take away from all their past glories. I doubt if I'm alone, but I've played their LP and 3 original 7"s to death since I first got them, along with the bootlegs and legit 7" that came out on BBP. You know all the chords, words and artwork to a tee. When I got this I wanted to play it so much, but was afraid to put it on at the same time. What was I to expect, it's been like over 17 years since "Onward Christian Soldiers" came out, I could hardly expect them to be the same. Funny enough, they have moved on and sound more mature and modern, but you'd still know it was them if you were given a tape with no name on it. There are a couple of songs that harkens back to the days of old, but there's an abundance of new sounds incorporating a surfy AGENT ORANGE vibe, to a more metallic beat. Stig's vocals are as addictive as ever and his lyrics sarcastic, angry and full of that bit they always had. It's also cool to see Squeal doing the artwork for them, he did all the artwork on their original Mortarhate releases. Hopefully they'll play over in Ireland. *(MH)*
GO-KART.

INRI - "Glos W Sprawie Zasadniczej" CD/ 49:39.
Polish pop-punk I'm afraid! I've not got a clue what they are singing about as my Polish is not good and was never on the curriculum at my local comprehensive. I wish I could be a bit more positive but the keyboards on track nine killed me off along with any hope of a decent review! Any collectors of Polish punk out there can have this CD if they want just send me a decent SAE and the first through to the SD PO Box owns it! Horrible cover of someone injecting drugs as well. *(GS)*
PASAZER, PO Box 42, 39-201, Debica 3, Poland.

INSTANT AGONY - "Think Of England" 7".
I can't remember for the life of me what I said about these re-formed again early 80's UK punkers in Suspect Device, but I bet it was good. Well, if it was not, then I've changed my mind! Its also good to see a band that's come back doing some new stuff and these three tuneful punk tracks are a breath of fresh air. Plenty of energy and something to inspire the kids getting into punk that I've seen about lately that not all bands have to sound like GREENDAY or RANCID *(GS)*
WEIRD.

IPANEMA - "Je Suis un Baseball Bat vs Skull" 7"
A complete return to form for Wiz. After the greatness of MEGA CITY 4 I always felt SERPICO were lacking a certain spark, everything was in the right place but it just needed setting ablaze and it never was. But here with IPANEMA, it's burning like a head-on crash between two petrol tankers - that's to say, blazing. Right from the opening riff, IPANEMA power along with driving melodic riffs, sweet-spot vocal harmonies and a real ability to write music that makes you want to set it on repeat play all day. It's like the return of MEGA CITY 4 but with value-added rock edges. Boss Tuneage is building a quality roster these days and IPANEMA are fast rising to the upper reaches of it. Thick white vinyl for the nerds too. *(RR)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, Beds., SG19 2WB, UK.

JASON / RADIKALKUR - Split LP.
Surely no one in their right mind calls their band JASON. Well it has happened. Dear oh dear. Anyways JASON from Brazil play some very odd punk rock. Some of it is straight forward thrash which I can deal with but some of it is mid paced punk with really bad vocals over the top. About every third song is great but the in-between bits just aren't worth putting up with. Lyrically this lot are into exploring death and the like. Some tripped out stuff in places but nothing to disturbing. RADIKALKUR on the flip are overtly political and then some. Musically there's not a lot on offer here for me. Chugging and bouncing along punk by the numbers with the occasional guitar bit that grabs your attention. On the whole though just a plodding record which although big on ideas, ultimately fails to grab me. *(FU)*
RADIKALKUR,

JETS VS SHARKS - "From Your First Cigarette to Your Last Dying Day" CD/ 14:42
Cliche time: get used to the name, you'll be hearing it a lot if the powers of goodwill have their way. JETS VS SHARKS play their hardcore like they mean it, and too few bands are doing that in these days of sales figures and press photo shoots. But this is hardcore like a much needed spray of lead into the fake music industry co-opted punk scene - it's powerful, heavy, persuasive and overridingly honest. These five songs are teeming with incisive guitar riffs, driving rhythms, embittered vocals and a seamless fusing of crushing hardcore and melodic rock. I guess it has elements of early (read: good) BOY SETS FIRE but coupled with the sort of gravelled rough rock of UNITAS and GUNMOLL. The muddy production lets this down a little and really doesn't give JETS VS SHARKS the thick and crisp sound they deserve, but once you've witnessed them delivering the goods live in a flurry of limbs and chords then you'll see just how capable this band really are. In a year where so many great British bands have split up, it's reassuring to see bands with the immense quality of JETS VS

SHARKS filling some of the gaps. Highly fucking good. *(RR)*
CAT N CAKEY, 20 Poyntz Road, Overton, Basingstoke, Hants., RG25 3HJ, UK.

JOE FERRY- "Big Ska" CD/ 42:03.
First it must be said that this is an album with song titles such as "The Creator Has A Master Plan" and "There But For The Grace of God Go I" and it is on a label with a "wide selection of mainstream and hard to find Christian ska and Reggae". But although I don't like religion and such things give me the creeps, although I do not believe in a God, and in fact have written and recorded a song with a chorus that proudly states to those who believe that "the God you worship is a cunt", I have always found that the passion with which musicians speak to or against their God, whatever that God might be, through their art can create some amazing music. NINA SIMONE, JOHNNY CASH, TOM WAITS and NICK CAVE spring immediately to mind as people I am a huge fan of who are want to sing about God, and so, just because this is "Christian" music, I wasn't going to just write it off…depending, of course, on the quality of their music and the over-bearingness of their Christian message. Luckily there are only vocals on one song, and although they are singing 'bout the Lord, they are sung really well so one can almost forgive them. Almost. The rest of the album is happily vocal-free. Just a lot of fantastic instrumentals that are a sort of jazz / ska hybrid with lots of saxophone and horn stuff and really well-played. Not really a punk rock album in either music or spirit, but a good listen nevertheless. More for jazz fans though (which I am). Don't really know why they sent it here? You'll notice those artists I cited earlier who sing about God don't pretend to be punk rock so I don't know why these guys do. It's not ska-punk, or Christian punk, it is just ska, plain and simple. Christian ska. No punk. Nada punk. Nein punk. It's like, all punk bands take a step forward… where do you think you're going Mr. Ferry? If you play punk rock put up your hand… not so fast Joe! Still, I liked it, even if the Christian thing gives me the heeby-jeebies. What can I say? I like jazz. Shit on the Lord, Halle-cocksucking-lujah, and fuck you very much! *(DM)*
SHANTYTOWN, www.shantytown.sphosting.com

JOEYFAT - "The House of the Fat" CD/ 39:19.
You know I'm sure I saw JOEYFAT in the 90's and I'm sure they didn't sound like this. I'm sure it's the same JOEYFAT though too because there was definitely a bit of a Home Counties scene then too, and they were in it, and this band are somewhere in Kent. Could be horribly wrong though. This is kind of eclectic cool and so there's some moving with the times there. Sort of electronic indie with the semi-talking / shouting of obscure lyrics. It has a charm! And is just beautifully odd. Maybe there's also a scene going on here - lots of bands with names like YE WILES on the same label. What can I say? If "eclectic" and "beard" are words that appeal to you, then maybe you ought to check this out. *(HE)*
UNLABEL.

JUDAH JOHNSON - "Kisses and Interrogation" CD/ 58:26.
JUDAH JOHNSON, a band not a person, give an hour's worth of meditative, layered and broody indie rock. Great moments include "Vegas revisited" and "The Great Humanitarian" where energy and dynamism come to the fore but this CD is typical singer-songwriter stuff (Daniel Johnston being the singer, and not the one you know), from the string arrangements to the all-pervading Sunday morning chill factor. It's really well done, vocally soft and dreamy, almost BEATLES-ish at times but very long and indulgent. Good for coffee and a cake. *(HE)*
FLAMESHOVEL.

K-LINE - "How You Gonna Scare Us Now?" CD/ 37:04.
I really don't need to tell you so much about K-LINE here, just go and read their interview for all the hard facts on one of the UK's best punk rock bands right now. After you've done that, go to www.dfbpunk.com and read an American's interpretion of this incredible record, laid out like an Oxford University dissertation - the guy puts into words everything you will get from this record, that I would never have the space to do here. There's a lot of scene "hype" around K-LINE right now, they're getting amazing reviews left, right and centre, and they actually pull a crowd at live gigs (unheard of for a UK band!)... I think the reasons for this are apparent after just one listen. K-LINE are unlike anything around in the UK right now. They bring together the best elements of an old school American punk rock sound (a la ARTICLES OF FAITH, DAG NASTY, et al) and combine it with a more modern edge, and there is definitely parts of certain songs that are reminiscent of "In/Casino/Out" era AT THE DRIVE-IN, but this is really more to do with the vocals than anything else. This combination is both dark in its approach and uplifitng at the same time. The lyrics are also intelligent and articulate, coming from a totally punk place (see "Hostage To Finance" for example) and the addition of a cover of THE CURE's "A Forest" is just unbelievably fitting. This is the best CURE cover I have heard since DINOSAUR JR's sludge-tastic version of "Just Like Heaven"... it's really impossible to tell you just how damn important K-LINE is to the scene in this country right now, so just buy the fucking record already and try and prove me wrong. You won't be able to. *(MD)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

K10 PROSPECT, THE - Self Titled CD/ 9:14.
The first time I listened to this I didn't have the cover, so that assumption based on the music alone was that THE K10 PROSPECT were a rock/metal band. In that their music is all rock based, sung vocals (like metal bands of the 80's), guitar solos, medium paced licks (though getting fast and heavier now and again). Can't really liken them to one particular band, but when you hear music you either go who's the metal, punk, hardcore etc band. Now that I have the cover and lyrics etc, they state they are a punk band on the cover and have a pay no more tag on their CD and are pro DIY. I'm none the wiser with the lyrics as they are personal based. There's an anti war piece in the CD, where they denounce any war and put their necks on the line especially being an American band. So are they punk or rock, well music is only the reflex of our emotions and it's what you do and how you do your business that makes you punk. *(MH)*
NESSA, 3375 North Russell Road, Bloomington, IN 47408, USA.

KARNVAPEN ATTACK - "Post Nuclear Hardcore" CD/ 10:55.
What you have here is ten songs of Spanish thrash punk. This usually gets me very excited. Thing is this lot however are average at best. The whole thing suffers from bad production. Don't get me wrong some thrash bands are better with bad production but not this lot. The drums are really tinny with the snare seeming to be the drummers favourite item to bash. Bland. *(FU)*
MALARAZA.

KICK JONESES - "Tales of Discontent" CD/ 43:19.
I like this CD the way you like a crappy song on the radio, no matter how obvious it may be, how much you know you should just dismiss it… something just seems to stick it's teeth in and you can't shake it ("Lifestyles of the rich and famous" anyone?!). This is pretty average rock pop with too obvious attempts at new wave (XTC) and the current trend of pop garage guitar rock (hey, maybe a name change to The KJ's would work?). It has a very commercial sound, keyboards, upbeat pop tunes and vocals way too high in the mix, but as laughable as the lyrics are and as cheesy as this is on almost level… it is, somewhat annoyingly, fairly enjoyable in short bursts. An album of this is way too much for any sane person to handle, but in snippets, there are some enjoyable songs on here, as much as I am loathe to admit that. There is some absolute tosh on here too, nah, not a fan… 3 songs do not an album make I'm 'fraid. All in all this is pretty sucky, it's all a bit '79 for me. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

KICKASS, THE - "Death Metal is for Pussies" CD/ 58:20
So, like, there's these guys right, and they get dressed up in tight pink y-fronts and tight pink vests okay. And then, right, they make themselves all wet and they pose and they pout and they make up these song titles like "So... You Want to Have a Led Zeppelin Riff Battle? Let's Do It!". Three of them start playing this fucking stuff right, and it's like some bastard hybrid of THE FUCKING CHAMPS and like, OXES and sort of TRANS AM and that guitarist who you once heard in a bar who was pretty fucking hot. Oh, and that drummer busking solos on a street corner in Barcelona, but like he'd gathered a fat-ass crowd of afternoon shoppers because this guy was like, busting some moves and fills from hell. And there was this record right, called "Death Metal is for Pussies", but you were too shit-scared to ask for it, because like, the guy behind the counter had a DEICIDE t-shirt on. *(RR)*
BIFOCAL MEDIA, PO Box 50106, Raleigh, NC 27650-0106, USA.

KILL YOURSELF - "Soft Touch of Man" CD
I remember a time once when a few kids I know from down the Callen Estate came over to Broughton just because there was a better Spar shop there. Thing is I know the only reason people think it's better is cause they had the most different flavours of fizzbombs you have ever seen, but kids from Callen don't even fucking like fizzbombs. This one particular Callen local, called Twateyes if memory serves, thought it would be fun to cram his gob full of about two million fizzbombs and then try and drink a cola Panda Pops. All this black shit started to ooze out of his nose, like his brain had turned to treacle and wanted out of his tiny skull. It was so funny that I actually pissed myself (which wasn't good as I had white chinos on at the time). One of the other kids from Callen saw this and called me gay then kicked shit out of me. I don't think I have ever had a better day than that in my life. Listening to this CD makes me feel like that. Sounds nothing like RAPEMAN. *(John AKA on behalf of RR)*
GRINGO.

KILLING SPREE, THE - Self Titled CDEP/ 11:43.
I like this. A little piece of red card comes with the CD saying "Angular post-hardcore, Belfast". Who needs to pigeon hole when the band have done it for you? This really has the flavour of a demo but is so beautifully presented that you'd hand over the cash willingly an instant after hearing them play. Alright it's tinny sounding but when has that got in the way of screamy, intense *post-hardcore?* Three tracks here - two with minimal, effective vocals and piercing guitars, and one mesmerising and varied instrumental. *(HE)*
LABEL?

KING PRAWN - "The Dominant View" CDS / 13:03.
Pretty odd seeing this in my review pile but I'll give anything a go. This lot have been knocking about for years now and seem to be doing pretty well for themselves on the metal / alterna' scene. They have a good amount of energy. Music made for alternative types and students. Rap / funk, with a punky edge. You know the drill, remember those people who all go into the song "No Fronts" by DOGEATDOG? Yeah well it's an updated version of that. Why I need another version of the same song (remixed 2 b cool?) and an accompanying video is beyond me and reeks of cheapo single action that reminds me of HMV. All things done this is pretty bland, and obviously not my bag. *(FU)*
GOLF.

KISS ME DEADLY - "Travel Light" CD/ 45:23.
Here's another lethal dose of quirky, slinky experimental indie rock from the folk at Blue Skies Turn Black and like their other releases, it's a wild, emotional and darn eclectic affair. Melancholy rubs shoulders with wild bursts of loud abandon and release and in all, "Travel Light" is an interesting, challenging listen. *(JP)*
BLUE SKIES TURN BLACK, 214 Thornhill, D.D.O. Quebec, HPG 1P7, Canada.

KNUCKLEHEAD - "Voice Among Us" CD/ 64:28.
Wow, what a package! An entire new eleven tracks plus included at no extra cost is the entire "Little Boots" LP. That's twenty four tracks in all, which you have to agree is pretty tremendous? At least, it would be tremendous if it weren't for the fact that listening to this band is as boring as watching Eunuchs fuck. *(DM)*
GHETTO ROCK, www.ghetto-rock.com

KUT U UP - "Pulled Over... Your Eyes Are Telling Me Different Son" CD/ 29:51.
Cool. I looked at the sleeve of this record and wondered why someone had sent a trip hop record to Fracture for review. I put the CD in the player and got the shock of my life; laid-back So.Cal post-hardcore. Veering from lo-fi, slacker pop one moment to taut raging post hardcore the next, like PAVEMENT covering FUGAZI. KUT U UP appears to be from an alternate reality where Dischord records were based in California instead of DC. This is a good thing. *(TW)*
ROWBOAT, 1010 Golden Road, Encinitas, CA 92024, USA.

LAST CHANCE, THE - Self Titled CD/ 18:23.
TURNING POINT style sensibilities from this band that contains bros from IN THE CLEAR, THIRTY SECONDS UNTIL SUPPER, and GOOD CLEAN FUN. More pounding and hard hitting than ITC, and with a more mature and patient approach to things, and a better balance between slow build ups, melodic sections and the all important mosh parts. These are one of the few HC bands in the UK that have my full support to pull this scene out of its current quagmire of posturing and soul-less bullshit. They have spirit, focus, energy, sincerity, and X's. We're all counting on them. *(SM)*
DEAD & GONE, 42 Glover Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 4HN, UK.

LAST YEARS HERO - "Start Over" CD/ 16:33.
Australian kids playing that NEW FOUND GLORY, ATARIS, SAVES THE DAY melodic pop rock. But these guys have that little something extra that is needed to rise above this dross-infected genre. In fact, I'd say they do a better job of things than a lot of *"name"* acts. It's super slick and melodic, plen-

ty of harmonizing, and the five songs showcased here are all really strong, full of invention, panache and soul, in fact, it's the honesty that appears to shine through that gives this CD its strength. I really like this. OK, so it's pop with guitars and should come with a parental warning sticker : ***"This CD contains music that will make your teenage daughter wank herself senseless."*** As this really is wet panties and sticky finger rock'n'roll... can't say it has that particular effect on me, but this is a very good release by a band who could be very big in the near future. (DS)
BELOW PAR.

LEIAH - "Sound and Diversity" CD/ 41:50.
Not a million miles away from LAST DAYS OF APRIL, LEIAH peddle soul-drenched power-core emo. Sounding particularly un-Swedish, they play hard and with passion. This is their third album, apparently, and it definitely shows in the solid sound. The guitars are suitably twangy, the vocals mesmerising (some might say whiny!) and keyboards make an appearance. Not a bad stab at a slightly overwrought genre. *(HE)*
BACKGROUND BEAT, Hogbergsgatan 33, 116 20 Stockholm, Sweden.

LEVELING, THE - Self Titled CD / 12:02.
Ouch, a great surprise here. If you like your punk fast and furious you have come to the right place. This lot are fronted by Chad from BROTHER INFERIOR who were pretty raging in themselves. This however steps it up a notch. Pounding bass heavy stuff from the word go. Lots of attention on the double bass pedal as well. They do take a step back from being full on grind and definitely keep things on the side of punk. The vocals are great and there's not many big shouters out there that can pull this off in my book. Where they are trying to get the words out and not just grunt. The lyrics deal with societies ills. Not very positive it has to be said but what do you expect from this sort of thing? Anyway if you can tear yourself away from all the big labels putting out punishing records and want to look further a field for something a bit less trendy. This is a good place to start. *(FU)*
ANGRY, YOUNG, AND POOR.

LEYTON BUZZARDS - "The Punk Collection" CD/ 43:45.
Another second rate UK punk band from yesteryear gets the re-issue treatment, whoopie fucking doo! These guys had a sound that was enjoyable enough, but bands like The BOOMTOWN RATS and The RUTS were soon on the scene with a similar sound but a lot more class and style. Those two bands still sound great to this day, but this collection of songs sounds horribly dated and offers nothing to me, just my opinion, as I know a few folks who would love this. I'm just not a fan of a lot of early punk rock and new wave, sure there are a few songs on here that are enjoyable enough, but nothing I'd ever consider playing again for my own pleasure. When the band broke up, two members returned in the 80's pop band MODERN ROMANCE... now I quite liked them with their silver suits, bad haircuts and *"Everybody Salsa"* song... oh wait, have I crossed the line? One for the 40-somethings who were there in the day I guess. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN OI!

LIAR / SUNRISE - "Decontaminate" Split CD/ 30:01.
LIAR have a pretty distinct sound. They seem to have survived the rise and fall of the whole H8000 sound and still walk tall and play hard. See, now if more of the bands of that ilk hadn't fallen off xTHE WAGONx then they might not now be selling drugs to school kids and pushing prams around Belgian council estates with their sXe tattoo's covered up. So anyway, often plagued by having one guitarist, it seems LIAR kept a stable 5 man line up long enough to do some real justice to these tracks in the studio. Obviously the buzzword is still SLAYER with typically dark and pessimistic lyrics. I heard the SUNRISE demo back in the day, and it was really bad. This CD however showcases a totally different band. The regulation power-metal riffage is present, and these tracks have a feel that is midway between ARCH ENEMY and CARCASS. I can't decide who wins this little musical tug of war so we'll call it a tie, and on the way out of the theatre, please take a moment to read the little paragraph on the inlay for this CD. *(SM)*
LIFEFORCE, PO Box 938, 09009 Chemnitz, Germany.

LIGHTYEAR - "Chris' Gentleman Hairdresser and Railway Book Shop" CD/ 32:50.
These guys have the best lyrics ever. They are equal parts comedic and serious streams of consciousness that are just entirely unique. Like PROPAGHANDI if they were George Carlin, if that makes any sense. Musically they are incredibly dynamic, mixing ska, hardcore, and punk, all with a compelling brass section and terrific vocal melodies. All in all, a great collection of some great music *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME.

LIMECELL - "It's Gonna Get Ugly" CD / 29:53.
Now don't get me wrong I like Oi! music. I do, however, have deep reservations about most current bands doing this style. LIMECELL are yet another reason why I avoid the current crop of Oi!. This just hits off where every other 3rd generation band doing this stuff does. Just a load of blokes playing up-tempo pub rock with a huge tattooed geezer with the obligatory shouted vocals. The lyrics are pretty much par for the course as well. If you like a lot of stuff from New York either on the Oi! or Hardcore front you`ll more than likely be into this. Music for people who don't like to use their brain so much. (*FU)*
TKO.

LO CAST STYLE - Self Titled 7".
The name and red cover definitely intrigued me, in so much if I saw this in a record shop I would buy it for that alone. The cover has a fence, from what looks like a concentration camp and a watch tower keeping privy to it all. I'm guessing here, as there are no countries or anything on the cover etc, that they are from Finland and no they are not a dis-core band. They've got a real END OF THE CENTURY PARTY, EBOLA raw spazzed core vibe going down and pull it off wonderfully. Chaotic raw vocals, crusty jazz riffage and a rhythm backbone to keep it all in place. Good lyrics and graphics add to the unique and passionate energy that this 7" blasts out of my stereo speakers. So if I had have bought it in a shop, it would have been a great buy. *(MH)*
www.longtimerecords.cjb.net

LONELY KINGS - "Ides Of March" CD/ 24:21.
This is fucking foul. LONELY KINGS sound like eighties cock rockers disguised as clean-cut emo boys. This is total mainstream rock, with vague and very slight alternative leanings - like NICKLEBACK fused with TAKING BACK SUNDAY or some other musical trash. Every rock cliché is explored and embraced showcasing a band with no taste whatsoever. It's like DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL playing BRYAN ADAMS and BON JOVI covers. This is hell! *(JP)*
FEARLESS.

LOST PROPHETS - "Burn Baby Burn" CDS/ 3:23.
The mentally retarded doofus at the label this band are on included a "funny" note with this CD about how he had a bet with some other mong in their office over whether we'd include a review of this or not. Well, hey, retardo, it looks like you've both won. Hahaha. *(MD)*
VISIBLE NOISE.

LOVE SONGS - Self Titled CD/ 46:29.
This is DIY taken to it's extreme. Some bloke in a garage with an abundance of equipment and a lot of spare time on his hands. Occasionally helped out by other "musicians" this guy trys to emulate ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE in the dorky songs department with crappy electro beat box sounds and lyrics which will either have you in stitches or do absolutely nothing for you. Unfortunately I fall into the latter category and found this whole thing pretty painful listening. I guess if you are a close friend of this guy it will have you reeling with laughter, but the wider world? I'm not so sure. Song titles like "Ku Fulafel" and "The No Pants Party" along with "I turned into a Medley" sum the humour level up. The music also reminded me of some of those really crappy bands that used to appear on old Allied Records compilations in the early 90`s. Over the space of 25 songs I got irked and then annoyed by the whole thing. I know it's supposed to be cool to like this stuff and dorks are where it's at in the US but I'm left cold. ATOM is fun for about three listens, this lasts about one. Do you really want to spend your money on a one trick pony? *(FU)*
LOVE SONGS, c/o Craigums, PO Box 623, Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA.

MACHINE GUN ETIQUETTE - "Reality Check" LP.
The front cover is ace, a picture of the queen with a lizard lurking through her royal façade. M.G.E. play bouncy punk rock, with snotty vocals and classic riffage. The, at times, have a sound similar to DOG SHIT SANDWICH, but I have to say I much prefer D.S.S. as they have more charm. I'm not saying that M.G.E. aren't any good, they are. But they are a tad predictable and dare I say boring. The BLONDIE cover doesn't save them and as far as I'm concerned a PINK FLOYD cover would never save a punk band. Sorry, it's a real shame as I really wanted to like this as they seem a popular band. *(MH)*
CAMPARY, Friedrichstr., 110, 40217, Dusseldorf, Germany.

MAIROLLOSNOUTA - "Un Prototipo De Ser, Amable Y Detestable" CD/ 29:57.
YES! This CD is utterly fantastic. MAIROLLOSNOUTA ram through 14 fast as fuck, but catchy as hell tunes that will make you shake your fists while tapping your toes. They really remind me of that incredible South American band FUN PEOPLE, in that their vocalists sound very similar and have a high energy bite that is just waiting to explode. If you will, imagine old SNFU (at their best), but sped up and with a distinctly European sound then this is what these guys sound like. I had to force myself to press stop and could have kept it on repeat for hours, it's that infectious - it's hard to praise it anymore than I have already. Unfortunately their lyrics are in their native Spanish, so I haven't a clue what they are on about. But the couple of live photos included indicate that they must be pretty explosive live. Do yourself a favour and get it. *(MH)*
MALARAZA, AP. Co. 6037-50080, Zaragoza, Spain.

MALEFACTION - "Where There is Power, There is Always Resistance" CD/ 25:09.
Oh yes indeed, another top-notch release from this Canadian outfit. Sadly this is a band that seems to get overlooked by most people but have been delivering the goods for years and don't seem too concerned about "making it". A bloody good job as the 15 tracks on here are storming metal/hardcore outburst, which for a genre that is pretty stale is Impressive. This lot blow a lot of the current Relapse bands for six and as for all the SxE bands pretending to be metallers, they should pay attention to this lot. Metal tinged hardcore with a very political stance, about time! A lot of bands in this field think that if you play fast and loud enough you will be accepted into the fold and as a rule they are. I like a lot of that stuff, but when a band like MALEFACTION manage to blend ultra brutal music with intelligent lyrics I have a lot more time for them. I still hold onto the belief that music can and should (though not always) be used as a vehicle for change. This lot even list a host of websites for you to check out, which I think is pretty great as loads of metal. Anyway if you like CONVERGE et al you'll be into this bunch. Oh and they are on the mighty fine G7 label which is ran by some folks from PROPAGANDHI, so you know your money is going to decent people doing good things. This really is a winner all round. *(MH)*
G7, PO Box27006, 360 Main Street Concourse, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4T3, Canada.

MANIC HISPANIC - "Mijo Goes To Jr. College" CD/ 38:01.
Punk classics re-written with a Mexican bent, so instead of "I turned into a Martian" by The MISFITS you get "She turned into Llorona" and SLF's "Barbed wire love" is now "Barrio love". Other bands covered are TSOL, VANDALS, DICKIES, DAMNED, GBH, D.I., RAMONES and NO FX. Is it any good? Well, no, not really, the songs are at a pedestrian pace, the comedy value is pretty thin (unless you're Mexican, then it may be a lot more amusing) and it's a pretty tired affair. This is, I think, the second album from these guys and like most novelty acts... good for one record and that's it. I found this a dull listen across the board, the "Milo" artwork with shades, bandana, top button only fastened and wispy moustache did make me chuckle though. Just plain boring. *(DS)*
BYO, PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067, USA.

MARATO, THE - "Dirty Stories" CD/ 24:51.
THE MARATO sound a bit like AT THE DRIVE-IN and PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES. So do a fucking lot of other bands at the moment. *(JP)*
BLUE SKIES TURN BLACK, 214 Thornhill, D.D.O. Quebec, HPG 1P7, Canada.

MEA CULPA - "They Put You In A Mask" CD/ 43:57.
Never heard of this band before the CD rolled in but I have to say that they "rock"! Did I have to use that phrase? Well it best describes MEA CULPA and their particular brand of punk rock for the purpose of this review. Great political and very long lyrics about life in the good old USA to back up their tunes. Can't say an awful lot more than I have, so I won't. *(GS)*
EMPTY, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 88012, USA.

MEANWHILE - "The Show Must Go On" 7".
This record has been out for about two years so a bit odd to get one now... Anyway MEANWHILE are Swedish and naturally have a tenancy to worship at the feet of DISCHARGE and ANTI CIMEX but with a more burly and bass heavy approach. They do what you want them to do effectively. Top-notch distortion and blazing punk from beginning to end. The song title 'Merchants of Violence and Death' says it all. If you like it loud, crusty and Swedish you probably own this already. *(FU)*
COMMUNICHAOS MEDIA.

MELEE - "Against the Tide" CD/ 15:31

I was advised to go to a curry house in Leeds called India and what I was served was watery, insipid, corriander-flavoured water - I think this is the musical equivalent. Like walking into your house to find some cunt has artexed all of the interior. Are the people who run Hopeless tone deaf or just hopeless? This is mid-paced indie rock done bad, not like Michael Jackson bad, just bad and all the lyrics rhyhme. *(Subbo on behalf of RR)*
HOPELESS.

MIDNIGHT EVILS, THE - "Straight 'til Morning" CD/ 37:14.

Fucking Hell!!! This is a totally kick-ass disc, fired by filthy frenzied gonzo 'DC on speed boog-o-rama, super slurred vocalising and a pulverising rhythm section. The music is loud, raw and noisy, and the duel guitar assault is relentless. If Aussie smokestacks like BORED! and THE POWDER MONKEYS (incidentally - Tim Hemmensly RIP) make a blip on your Rawk'n'Roll radar, then get Straight ahead and check this out. Recorded at The Sweatbox, with (you guessed it) Tim Kerr *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2115, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

MIGHTY STARS, THE - "Girls! Girls! Girls!" CD/ 12:45.

This homage to gels is pretty shameless. With an array of pretty girls across the cover (in fact, one cover star Loma in a range of 60's hats and poses) and a mock garage cover boasting "Girl-fulled garage beatpop" I'd been hoping for something less wet, maybe even some girls on guitars! But alas, this is Matt, Rob, Ian and Gary Lee respecting the ladies with some Britpop-esque indie tracks about Brian Wilson, girls, Suzanne, more girls. Nice and loud but the claps did it for me. No thanks. *(HE)*
http://mightystars.50megs.com

MIGRA VIOLENTA - "Hardcore Crust" LP.

Now there's a real give away with the title of this LP! What you read, is what you get. MIGRA VIOLENTA are nothing short of incredible. They blast through 21 songs in now time at all, when the record finishes you just want to put it on again, which is what I have been doing. Just think of LOS CRUDOS, DRI, NEGATIVE APPROACH, RIPCORD, SEDITION etc and this is what you get. Incredible recording and interesting song structure. I cannot fault one aspect of this, not that's what I intend to do. But there are too many uninteresting fast bands out there, but that's not a problem for MIGRA VIOLENTA. They are from Argentina, a country so fucked up on the humanitarian right side of things, you'd expect nothing less than incendiary fuelled hardcore with political lyrics. No subject is left unturned, from the cops, to bent politicians, poverty, multinationals and more. Some of the songs already appear on a split 7", but I'm sure most people probably have got it? I only first came across them with the cool interview that appeared in Maximum Rock n Roll a few issues ago. Any self thinking hardcore punk needs this LP. *(MH)*
LES NAINS AUSSI, c/o Nicolas Retiere, 1 Rue Edgar Quinet, F-38000 Grenoble, France.

MILKMAN - "Is This Punk Enough For You?" CD / 24:52.

You know how you shouldn't judge a book by it's cover. Well you shouldn't judge this band by it's crap name! This is some pretty great streamroller punk-thrash. There's 21 songs and only one clocks in over two minutes long. This lot are not hanging around for the slouches. There's an obvious love of metal in here and the "crossover" kids will lap this up. Reminds me of later day SLAYER meets TEAR IT UP or something. Hilarious lyrics ripping into everything pretty much and this band seems to be laughing at themselves as much as us. They even write a song about 'Martha Splatterhead' who was the mainstay of every ACCUSED LP in the 80`s. 'The Day Evil Died' and 'Damage Done' are total thrash gems. The former could be on any 80`s thrash record. Top stuff. There's also the odd song about the glories of beer, and how you can't resist it's temptation, probably some strange homage to TANKARD. The inlay folds out into one of those metal collages atypical of the 80`s crossover scene. Cheesy long hair, mullets, pentagrams and blokes drinking beer. The whole thing appears to be a total joke and joke bands usually get boring fast but the music on here is solid from beginning to end. I can imagine their gigs being a beer soaked mosh pit. Get this, dust off your old denim jacket and start thrashing like it's 1986 again! *(FU)*
KANGAROO

MILLENCOLIN - "Battery Check" CDS/ 10:39.

These guys have got to be one of the most prolific bands around because I always seem to be reviewing their stuff for some 'zine or another. You know what they sound like by now I'm sure - burnt-out melodic hardcore with no more ideas left and sounding like a parody of their former selves. *(DM)*
BURNING HEART, PO Box 441, 701 48 Orebro, Sweden.

MILWAUKEES, THE - "Sunset and Sunrise" CD/ 43:43.

This is a re-issue of an album from 1998 and man, I think it's the best material I've heard from this New Jersey band. I'm finding them real hard to pin down in the written word, it's rock music, a few punk rock power flashes, but yep, this is rock, maybe drawing in some Springsteen style vocals with music that is akin to recent GAMEFACE, sometimes I get flashes of PEARL JAM. But it's the vocals that really make you sit up and take notice, powerful and heartfelt, and with many of the songs building up to crashing choruses that implant themselves in your head for days, well, it's a winning formula. In fact, they remind me a lot of a great early 90s band called RUTH RUTH, very similar vocals indeed. Some of the songs on this album are amazing, just pure rock classic tuneage and I've been playing this to death... well worth picking up if any of the above makes sense to you. The two albums since this one have been a lot less rock and more punked up. Cool band, but I do like this early material better. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

MINDFIELD - "Be-low" CD/ 33:52.

What the fuck happened to Lifeforce? I found out recently they signed some Bristol band nobody in the hardcore scene had heard of, and now they're putting out straight up power metal that sounds like IRON MAIDEN one minute and SKID ROW the next. I despair. This is bollocks. Bring back the chugging metallic vegan sXe sound this label dabbled with back in its prime, and avoid this release unless you un-ironically wear a mullet, a leather jacket, and have MOTLEY CRUE sew on patches. *(SM)*
LIFEFORCE.

MINNIES - "Un' Estate Al Freddo" CD/ 27:55.

Superb melodi-core set at a nice pace, like a faster SAMIAM with those luscious ringing guitars and exceptional vocals (sung in Italian) that remind me of Golly (HDQ / The JONES). I loathe to say this, as I really appreciate bands who sing in their native tongue, but if the vocals were in English I think I'd have an album on my hands that would be a regular visitor to my player. I know that's such a lame thing to say, especially as the Italian language rolls off the tongue so effortlessly, but I can only be honest here. Musically this is faultless, actually it's faultless on every level really, imaginative song writing, speedy but in no way thrashy, clean and engaging. The musicianship is exquisite and every track is a winner, a superb album from start to finish without one weak moment. Screw what I said about the vocals, I'm learning Italian to this CD! *(DS)*
LABEL?

MINUS TIDE, THE / TURN AROUND NORMAN - Split LP.

This split LP is on Mountain records, now it's been quite a few years since I bought anything released by this label but I do a few of the early releases, it was around the time when Emo was actually exciting and good. So I looked forward to playing this and thinking that maybe it will be some Emo that I can actually get my teeth into. Low and behold I'm half right anyway. Getting past the piano intro of THE MINUS TIDE they lunge forward with some impressive dischorant and angst ridden emotional hardcore, that makes me think of the times when this stuff smoked. You feel the blood run with the screams that are bellowed through some jazzed, rhythmic music. Fuck any of the pretentious music that has been peddled to the masses as emo, it doesn't a fucking clue compared to this. THE MINUS TIDE doesn't sing about their girlfriends, but are more complex and vague. They bring back memories of FRAIL, BOB TILTON, HEROIN, POLICY OF THREE and to a certain extent FABRIC. On the flip we have TURN IT AROUND NORMAN, why do these EMO bands have such crazy names? They have heartfelt political lyrics and you can just feel their anger bleed through the speakers. They have a mixture of more soothing beats, sitting next to harsher sounds and dual anger. I like the latter half of their side more as it's got that early EBULLITION presence, whereas the first few track sound more akin to ASHES etc. If you've got the EMO bug, you don't need to go to rival schools to learn how to feel nor do you need a hundred more reasons why you should buy this LP instead of corporate bland impersonations? *(MH)*
MOUNTAIN CIA, PO Box 220320, Greenpoint Post Office, Brooklyn, NY 11222-9997, USA.

MISTREATERS, THE - "Playa Hated to The Fullest" CD/ 30:42.

The shit-hot sound of Milwaukee, from a quartet who super-charge the speakers in a destructive ugly manner, and occasional comparison to the NB TURKS is not without reason, and I'd say that's quite a compliment all told. It's all heavy and mean 'til track six when the fast tempo takes a break for the haunting "She's My Witch", before "Hard on The Eyes" picks up the dynamite stick for a rampaging run thru to the close, and the Rock Out "Ol' Sugarfoot" complete with crazed STOOGES sax fuelled finale. Top Drawer Disc *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2115, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

MIXELPRICKS, THE - "Complete The Grin" CD/ 45:57.

Ah, I remember a time when my band was imaginarily booked to go on an imaginary tour of Europe with these guys on a record label that turned out to be a figment of one sick lunatic's fucked up imagination and that left bands like us and THE MIXELPRICKS absolutely motherfucked in its wake of deception and lies, and it brings a warmth to my heart and a tear to my eyes everytime I see one of us bands who were screwed by that son of a bitch finally release the album that this label tried to destroy, and so it is with no small pleasure that I finally listened to this new release by THE MIXELPRICKS. It's some pretty interesting pop-punk that sounds sort of like the QUEERS going jet-sailing with latter day MTX but with a distinct twang to the tunes and production that makes it something of its very own. A very cool album indeed and a nice triumph from former adversity! *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

MONDO GENERATOR - "A Drug Problem That Never Existed" CD/ 38:37

Fucked up like Ozzy on good acid. That's good fucked up. I rock out like a hot shrimp. *(RR)*
IPECAC.

MONTANA PETE - "Beige" CD/ 29:42.

Self-indulgent, scratchy and unpleasant anti-pop. I can't even listen to it, let alone summon up the bullshit to write about it. Animals shouldn't be left alone with young children (or vice versa) and some young adults shouldn't be left alone with musical instruments. *(DS)*
PO Box 24356, London, SW17 9FE, UK.

MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK - "I Am The Movie" CD/ 43:10.

MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK play quirky, keyboard driven, college-rock. As you would expect, it's all vaguely reminiscent of GET UP KIDS and REGGIE AND THE FULL EFFECT but there's also touch of early 80's US New Wave such as THE CARS in the mix to differentiate them from the scores of other GET UP KIDS copyists. It's all very well played but it doesn't really appeal to me as I've never been a fan of GUK. Frankly, it's all a bit Dawson's Creek for my taste but I'm sure the "kids" will love it. *(TW)*
EPITAPH EUROPE, PO Box 10574, 1001 EN Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

MOTORAMA - "No Bass Fidelity" CD/ 34:28.

Well the title of this CD don't lie, as this trio of Italian Ladies lurch through a dozen fuzzy menacing numbers, live in the studio... Laura drums, Elena sings, and Daniela guitars and sings too, and they really do kick up a storm, most enjoyable. If you liked the idea of THE KILLS, but discovered they were way off the mark, then MOTORAMA might just be up your alley. *(PC)*
VIDA LOCO.

MOTORPSYCHOS - Self Titled CD/ 28:54.

Crap. *(RR)*
www.motorpsychosrock.com (a lie!)

MOVEMENT, THE - "Move!" CD/ 37:24.

Pretty decent mod-influenced rock with a little 60's garage punk style creeping in on occasion and some ska. The ska parts are more in line with what The 'TONE were doing, and it works OK, if a little basic and not really rockin' enough for my own personal enjoyment. The *"Germanic"* accented vocals are a little off-putting. With a few well-placed vocal melodies this would have a fuck load more impact. *"Wasted youth"* is a little korker of a song, but overall the consistency is stretched and it's a bit of a mish-mash affair. Not bad though, I like it but I doubt it'll be played again. *(DS)*
LABEL?

MUCH THE SAME - "Quitters Never Win" CD/ 33:17.

Do they still call this stuff pop-punk? Or is it skate-punk, now? Or melodic hardcore? I find it so hard to keep up. What we have here is a collection of metal-tinged melodic punk rock that wouldn't sound out of place on an Epitaph or Fat Wreck comp circa 1994-6. That stuff didn't really do it for me back

then and this isn't grabbing me enough to change my opinion. It's all very well played and put together but it just leaves me cold. *(TW)*
A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA.

MY FAVOURITE CO-PILOT - "South Drive" CD/ 33:41.
Very fashionable, shouty and screamy, then super melodic and emotional driving nu punk. Think KIDS NEAR WATER (with a singer who can sing), think HUNDRED REASONS (with a singer who doesn't look like a former STEREPHONICS drummer), think... well just pick up the latest Kerrang! and forget about the thinking part. The thing is, these guys are by far the most impressive act of the genre I've had opportunity to hear and this nine tracker is as good as it gets. This is very American sounding... not just vocally, the production is amazing on this, I don't know where Studio 64 is, but this is one of the best productions I've heard from a UK "punk" band ever. These guys have great songs, the vocals are strong (not sure about the screamed, away-from-the-mic nonsense mind you) and I have to say, this made much more sense to me after I'd seen them play live. Putting the acoustic version of *"Kiss me I'm bleeding"* at the end is an inspired idea, to bring you back down after eight songs of crashing and crushing emotional power. Like having your chest stroked and your neck nibbled after sex, it brings you back to the real world softly with its tenderness. Man, this is such a great album, well worth investigation. I heard they broke up, that sucks. But a new band is on the go already. *(DS)*
LABEL?

MY WAR - "Wounds" CD/ 22:13.
The infamous MY WAR release finally lands, and a sunny walk in the park it is not. So what do you get when you put members of CONCRETE SOX, IRON MONKEY, HARD TO (FUCKING) SWALLOW, EYEHATEGOD, SANZEN and DEADSIGHT in a rehearsal room together? All unmerry hell breaks loose, that's what. Fusing hardcore, grind, sludge, metal and doom, MY WAR plough through 5 gargantuan tracks of crushing weight and power, switching between nasty and... well, FUCKING nasty with ease. Gigantic guitars, pummelling power chords, and vocalists who've been swallowing shards of glass and then gargling liquid asbestos. The kind of CD you can't listen to with the lights off. (*SM)*
MANIAC BEAST, maniacbeast@hotmail.com

NATHANIEL GREEN - "Same Time Tomorrow" CD/ 40:34.
The info: Matt from DUGONG on acoustic guitar and vocals. Rob from PYLON on vocals, Rhodes piano and harmonica. Back up musicians include Joe and Chris from PYLON and Jarv from DUGONG. Fact 1: It's not punk rock, hardcore, ska-core, nu-metal or rock. Fact 2: If your love of music comes from the heart and soul and not from the hope of being hip, cool 'n' trendy and your tastes are non-genre specific, well then you have hope, individuality and intelligence. Fact 3: This is the best album you will buy this year so if it's missing from your collection, go fill in the blank space now. This CD is flawless, faultless and perfect. Listening to this band, either on disc or live, well, I am injected with hope, desire, love and happiness. Don't cheapen yourself with another drunken one-night stand, leave the filth in the club, go home alone, play this and awake a better person. That's not a *note-to-self*, it's advice to live by. When I was ten years old I'd listen to The BEACH BOYS on the headphones while the rain and wind lashed against the window, it gave me hope and a feeling of warmth in the cold despair of the English winter. This band has the same effect on me, I play this when I'm happy, when I'm sad, when I'm a little high, when I'm a little low, at six in the morning or at ten in the evening. I've not yet had sex to this record yet, that's the next step... freezing cold night outside, warm and cosy inside, lights off, scented candles aglow, a little warmed up inside with red wine, a fine lady dripping velvet liquid love, a hard on like a pick-axe handle... have I gone too far? Romance isn't dead and nor is the ability to produce amazing and true music. *(DS)*
FIREFLY, PO Box 30179, London, E17 5FE, UK.

NEGLECTED YOUTH / AWKWARD SILENCE - Split CD/ 10:28
The fact that Isle of Wight now has a punk scene is credit to those involved. Keep an eye on Shetland, I hear it's next. NEGLECTED YOUTH play punk rock and they play it fast and with guts, and on top of that they shovel in the hooks and melodies. It's let down by a weak production but these guys shout through it and sound like they mean it. It's GOOD RIDDANCE with more punk rock. AWKWARD SILENCE have something of a schizophrenic nature across their two tracks - the first is a hardcore blow-out with razor-cut vocals and powering riffs, it's good. Their second track however is a rough-hewn acoustic song that's endearingly honest; it's emotional in the truest sense of the word. I'd write more about this record but it's a matter of a short review or no review since we're so pushed for space so do them the honour and check this out. *(RR)*
RED CRAYON, 16 Swanmore Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 2TF, UK.

NERVE - "The Art of Falling Apart" CD/ 46:13.
Latest offering from a Scottish trio that's been trying so hard to 'make it' in the past few years, but clearly not getting there. By 'making it' I imply that their determination to succeed is laid bare by a press machine that's shameless in it's attempt to name all the corporate bands and 'events' that NERVE has featured at... you know, the type of spiel that'll name drop a few Big Names that the band they're promoting has 'gigged with' and makes it sound all intimate and cosy, but in reality it means their band was bottom of the bill at Deconstruction or some other soulless Mainstream Schmooze. I suppose if NERVE's music were interesting I'd be slightly more inspired, but it's a GREEN DAY rehash, and not even from when Billie Joe and Co. were a band I rated heavily. I'm Bored, I'm The Chairman of The Bored... *(PC)*
TWENTY STONE BLATT, PO Box 11491, Grangemouth, FK3 8WA, Scotland.

NET WEIGHT - Self Titled LP.
I kept putting off listening to this, as the artwork is pretty dire. I'm still not sure what's going on there. Big blur of stuff all in shades of blue. Hmmm. Anyways the music. Oh silly me. I should have known. This is pretty killer stuff. Total in your face hardcore attack from the word go. Taking all the best bits of the Spanish punk and blending it with something akin to the simplistic approach of OUT COLD and you're someway to getting there. Think along the lines of E-150 and ALL ILL if you would. This is cracking and doesn't let up at all. The lyrics are all in Spanish so I'm nit sure what they are about but they sure are pissed off about something. If you like it fast and furious, look no further. Let's hope they record more stuff and come over and tour the UK. *(FU)*
PUNKAWAY, PO Box 409, 07080, Palma De Mallorca, Spain.

NEUROSE URBANA - "Morte Caotica EP" 7".
NEUROSE URBANA are from Brazil and the songs on this 7" were recorded in 1997, 1999 and more bits added in 2002. Originally supposed to come out on a Japanese label, Strongly Opposed jumped in and here we have it. 6 raw, though decent quality, tracks of blatant DISCHARGE, DOOM styled crust. Slow intros are blown to pieces by more whirlwind blast beats, making for a kettle of noise. There's definitely a real old Spanish, South American feel to it all - which off course only leads to more charm. Anti war lyrics are the order of the day, along with cut n paste type graphics will have you wanting to add this to your already growing noise/crust record collection. *(MH)*
STRONGLY OPPOSED, Flurweg 29, 2504 Biel, Switzerland.

NEUROTIC SWINGERS / KEVIN K - Split 7".
I kick this split in to touch with the NEUROTIC SWINGERS, and a hyperbole of NEW BOMB TURKS propelled freewheeling Punk'n'Roll comes flying out the speakers... the vocalist sounds like a Francophile Eric TURK. Second song is better than the first, although neither are real keepers. Let's flip... and journeyman KEVIN K teams up with the REAL COOL CATS for some whiney JOHNNY THUNDER tones on bubble gum breeze "Melody", then takes a dive with a JOHNNY DENVER reprise - "Leaving on A Jet Plane" - which is way too whimsical for me. I recall Fat Mike's cabaret act doing a spunkier version *(PC)*
LOLLIPOP, 7 Impasse Monsegur, 13016 Marseille, France.

NEVER FACE DEFEAT - "Remember Your Heartbeat" CD/ 19:14.
One would assume this band took their name from the NO INNOCENT VICTIM track of the same name. Musically they aren't a million miles way either. Menacing guitar heavy hardcore that dabbles in both MADBALL style mosh and full on metallic HC like CONGRESS or DEFORMITY. The crew photo on the inlay card is a real let down, there are absolutely no attempts to replicate classic CRO MAGS, YOUTH OF TODAY, DMS or PATH OF RESISTANCE poses and instead it just looks like a bunch of people stood randomly at a bus stop. C'mon guys, make the effort! Lyrically we have the regulation songs about fakes, enemies and friendship, etc. All in all another solid release that will never get the recognition it deserves in today's massively over saturated 'metallic hardcore' scene. *(SM)*
DRA ENTERTAINMENT, www.demonsrunamok.de

NEVER SURRENDER / FACE THE ENEMY - Split CD/ 22:43.
There sure is some hardcore pedigree in both these bands and when I think about it, I should like this a hell of a lot more than I actually do, not that I don't like it - but it just could be more I guess. NEVER SURRENDER, who have John Porcelly on vocals and you'd never guess it especially if you heard him sing for PROJECT X. These guys sound more metal than hardcore. I could have sworn it was the guy from METALLICA singing, along with lots of thrash metal blast beats. I haven't a clue what the lyrics are about as there's no cover or anything. Joining them on this release is FACE THE ENEMY, who have Tim McMahon (MOUTHPIECE, HANDS TIED) on vocals and Ken Olden (BATTERY, etc) as well, though I'm not sure what he's playing - promo sheet doesn't specify. They play '88 youth crew styled hardcore, which is fast and excellent. I know I'm not giving this a thorough review, but when labels send out half assed promo CD's with a sheet of paper, how the fuck am I supposed to tell what things are about - isn't hardcore more than music? Anyway, I'm sure this will already sell bucket loads and be hyped all over the place. Good CD though, despite who's on it. *(MH)*
DEFIANCE, Ritterstr. 52, 50668 Koln, Germany.

NINE - "Killing Angels" CD/ 26:15.
Now this is what I reckon a lot of people expected FREYA (see review elsewhere) to sound like. Vocally similar to EARTH CRISIS, but with a more HELMET style song structure and the occasional melodic but dramatic passages. I remember being largely unimpressed with the last NINE album I had to review, but this is a lot better. The guitars are solid but restrained, and the real power is in their grooves and song structure rather than opting for sheer muscle to deliver their message. Because it is trimmed back of all gimmicks, you can project all sorts of comparisons onto these tracks. One minute it sounds like MINISTRY, the next, AMENDMENT 18, and the next, DANZIG. *(SM)*
BURNING HEART, Box 441, 701 48 Orebro, Sweden.

NO CHOICE / FIFTH HOUR HERO - Split 7".
Limited to 750 copies and released on super thick coloured vinyl (pink, white or clear red!) you already know this split release by Cardiff's NO CHOICE and FIFTH HOUR HERO from Canada is going to look good and be snapped up by record hording punks across the globe, but does it sound any good? Dumb question. FIFTH HOUR HERO carve out two chunky tracks of melodic rock that crackles with energy and power and both are undeniably commercial. It's certainly not hard to imagine the bands duel male / female vocals pumping out of every FM radio across the country, if not the world. Sharp, powerfully produced and passionate, these No Idea recording artists should go down a storm when they tour the UK soon. NO CHOICE are much grittier and less likely to make it onto an XFM / Radio One playlist however as this, my friends, is proper punk, played by people who have been living the life since the early eighties and know exactly what buttons to push to create three minute explosions of bitter rage backed up by melody, conviction and lyrics that actually have something to say (my, how old school!). 'Pollute And Polarize' tackles the subject of the BNP's growth in run down areas as the scumbags who run that party prey on peoples fears of asylum seekers and their general insecurities, while 'The Eleventh Hour' tackles Bush's quest for absolute power and his ability to carry out his extremist ideals. Excellent stuff. Seek this out and consume. *(JP)*
NEWEST INDUSTRY, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK.

NO WAY OUT - "Destruction Of Reality" CD/ 24:14.
Not sure if I have ever actually heard a band from Bulgaria before so this was a nice change. Only problem being is that this isn't really my cup of tea, mosh metal from start to finish which might appeal to resident tough guy reviewer Sean McKee, but to these ears it's pretty bland. I guess I should cut them some slack because they're from a country which probably has a worse scene than most but this just doesn't move me. The artwork of a gun with a big cross through it on the front of the CD is a good sentiment but then none of the songs actually deal with this topic that I could see!? Odd. Anyways, if you like things chuggy and growled out then look no further. Oh yeah and why do these bands always have to wear Nike sports clothing? *(FU)*
YEARS OF PAIN.

NOISY ACT OF PROTEST - "Hard To Deny" CD/ 28:35.
Whoah. This sounds like MADBALL, CRO MAGS and BIOHAZARD all rolled together and speeded up with some proper 'crossover' vibes like S.O.D or THE CRUMBSUCKERS. I know these dudes have been round for a while (fifteen years according to a line in the title track) and their lyrical content is varied, and they sing about everything from regular topics like betrayal to the capitalists behind the Internet, to escaping societies follies on a motorbike! An extremely solid and thick production help this thing hit home with a lot of weight behind it, and laced with an anthemic quality that

most young, inexperienced hardcore bands would overlook when they structured the songs. *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125 Aw Obbicht, The Netherlands

NOT MOVING - "Land Of Nothing" LP.
These folks were an old Goth band from Italy circa 1984. To be brutally honest, if I saw these LP in a record shop I would definitely not buy it and would probably laugh at them as it shows them all looking sad at what looks like the entrance of a graveyard. But listening to it, they were not that bad. Kind of like old SISTERS OF MERCY, BAUHAUS, NEW MODEL ARMY, etc. Predominately female vocals, well they were a goth band, with some male vocals. It's pretty fast, considering the genre and I suppose the Italian feel does ad a little charm. But I can see too many of the Fracture readers being into it. I can imagine little metallers who are into the current gothic metal thing that seems to be going on being into it, but not many else. Can't for the life of me see why it was released, considering it's the same label that released a comp of raw Italian hardcore bands, despite being from the same country they're on different planets. *(MH)*
AREA PIRATA.

NUTRAJET - "For Your Protection" CD/ 39:40.
I wasn't that bowled over by their previous CD, but numerous spins later of this Florida duo's new offering and I'm more appreciative of their Punky Hard Rock fusion. Yeah, another Duo, but don't go lumping these 2 motor heads in with the stripped down retro-Garage Rock camp, because this is much more high octane fodder that has leanings to THE STOOGES, ZIGGY era BOWIE, and even traces of HANOI ROCKS trash filled arrogance, plus there's a buncha covers (on a second 'bonus' disc) that gives extra weight and directive to their influences - CHEAP TRICK, RICH KIDS, SAINTS, MC5, SMALL FACES, ROXY MUSIC and THE CREATION. Includes a QuickTime movie for the track "Deleted" where there's a chance to view the powerful chemistry that fuses this outfit. Sadly, since the release of "For Your Protection", and just prior to touring commitments, drummer Jeff Wood suffered a seizure and subsequently, underwent surgery for removal of a brain tumour. Hope he's doing better now, and able to start thumping the skins again soon *(PC)*
TWENTY STONE BLATT.

ODD MAN OUT - Self Titled CDEP/ 12:05.
Three new tracks from ODD MAN OUT who play melodic hardcore with a metal edge, and they do this superbly. No pussying around - it's straight down the line, passion-packed guitar-filled angst. ODD MAN OUT are too good to miss, this is intense, loud and amazingly cathartic. *(HE)*
LABEL?

ODDBALL'S BAND - "Fucked Up Right" 10".
More infectious Garage Rocking, with a sharp Punk snarl, on this 10" from the German Trio, a dozen songs that encompass fucked and funky stripped down Rhythm and Blues, rolling waves of Surf, and plenty of lip smacking knee trembling head popping RocknRoll. After a few laps of the turntable, I'd say the tracks on Side Two were the stronger, especially "Gully Mojo" "Disconnected" and "Fly Shit on The Pane" - oh, and my workmate Paul advised me the cover concept takes off of a COLTRANE sleeve. He'd know! *(PC)*
WEIRD SCIENCE, Roemerstrasse 55a, 53111, Bonn, Germany.

ODDBALL'S BAND - "Shit Explosion '93 - '99" CD/ 54:25.
I've never heard of Germany's ODDBALL'S BAND, but after just half a dozen numbers I'm sure there's no better place for me to get acquainted than on this 22 track compilation of past releases. Central to literally everything is the man himself, who assumes a serious of identities - Gawky Oddball's, Long Tall Oddball's and Slim Dirty Oddball's, and he play's all the instruments on the early days recordings. There's something of The Billy Childish about this chap, although musically, whilst occasionally flitting with HEADCOATS type mania, there's more of a GUN CLUB and CRAMPS feel, with some NOMADS rockiness. A keeper *(PC)*
SCENE POLICE, www.scenepolice.de

OFF MINOR - "The Heat Death of the Universe" LP.
Another band whose name I keep reading but never get round to hearing. Well I had an inkling of what I thought they might be like and I wasn't far wrong. More "screamo" action than you can shake a stick at. Loads of lyrics where the singer is trying to decide whether he is a bad person just for being alive and what it all means in the big picture etc. I'm lost after two minutes of that. I have problems dealing with my own inner thoughts never mind this fella's. Obviously certain people can relate to this but personally I find it irritating. Add to that the five minute lounge music breakouts and I'm running for the door. These bands bore me on record and usually have the same effect live. I blame Dischord and Ebullition. Oh, and as for the cover art - a photo of some chairs. Please! *(FU)*
EARTHWATERSKY CONNECTION,

ON A SOLID ROCK - "Where The Kids Don't Play" 7".
Well they don't play in this playground anymore, what with empty beer bottles and whatnot lying around. But hey, where the hell did these guys pop out of? ON A SOLID ROCK a pretty wonderful to say the least, this Finnish band has a basic youth crew style, but add a little punk rock and grunge to their sound. Some nice slow break downs with meandering riffage and moody drumming - exquisite. A mixture of fastish hardcore and more melodic stuff really suits this 7". Good lyrics and nothing about being stabbed in the back or crap like that. Make sure you pick up this 7". *(MH)*
COMMITMENT, Klein Muiden 38, 1393 RI Nigtevecht, The Netherlands.

ON THE MIGHT OF PRINCES - "Where You Are And Where You Want To Be" CD/ 48:35.
AT THE DRIVE-IN sure have a lot to answer for. Because they stumbled across a fairly original sound within the post-hardcore genre and successfully reached a massive amount of people through the media exposure that came their way, they spawned thousands of imitators. And here's another one. Yes, ON THE MIGHT OF PRINCES are bone-tight, passionate and very good at what they do but unfortunately, someone else did it better before them and way too many people are doing it as good, if not better than them now. *(JP)*
TRAFFIC VIOLATION, #22 Box 772, E. Setauket, NY 11733 USA.

ONCE OVER TWICE, THE - "Special Moments to Detonate Themselves" CD/ 31:12.
After more than a few labels were prodding THE ONCE OVER TWICE for a release, it would appear that they're going alone because try as I might I can't locate any label detail on this release, so I'm assuming it's self-released. And therein lies the interesting anomaly that one of this year's strongest British releases isn't even on a 'recognised' record label - there's actually something heartwarming about that, as though when you play this disc you're being initiated into a privileged masonic society of good taste. This is, quite simply, a stunning record that slices open the cadaver of punk rock and lets the guts spill out everywhere. THE ONCE OVER TWICE simply exude a polished grittiness and the sort of power that takes you in a headlock and chokes your scrawny neck. They take the likes of BLUETIP, early FUGAZI, classic GRAY MATTER and even right back to MISSION OF BURMA and they deliver it in a revitalised and truly infectious remaking. A song like "Don't Go Outside" has the sort of dynamism and potency that most bands would kill for, and what's more THE ONCE OVER TWICE have committed their sound to disc with the sort of frenzied intensity of a killer live performance. This doesn't need press sheets, glossy coverage or paid-on support slots; music as genuine and exhilarating as this speaks far louder than any cheap publicity. Check this out at all costs. *(RR)*
THE ONCE OVER TWICE, 43 Providence St, Greenbank, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 8JQ, UK.

OPERATION NAIL BOMB - "Life's Too Short" CD/ 23:11.
Fast and shouty hardcore, raw and uncompromising, but very listenable. Maybe it's to do with the humour they inject at certain points, it kinda endures them to you. With song titles like "Punx against the pricks", "Sniffing glue", "Fucked up" and "Cunts", well you know it's punk rock central here. The ska deviation of "Life's too short" works surprisingly well, coming off like a mid-period SNUFF number. To be honest, I never play this kinda stuff or go watch it for my own personal enjoyment, but when it's played with a certain attitude and done this well, I can't help but like it somewhat. The songs are kept short, it's powerful and they seem to be enjoying the trip. Power to 'em, god knows how a band like this "progresses" mind you! *(DS)*
8, Sydney Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5RD, UK.

OUR WAR - "Traditions Demo" 7".
Their 10" "If You're Not Now" (also on Deranged) totally smoked and I can't just stop playing it. But this 7" in comparison is fucking shite. Maybe it's a demo or something recorded before the 10", but it just doesn't have the fire and passion of it. In a nutshell it's boring and I've played it a couple of times (mainly for this review) and to be honest I can't say I'll listen to it too much in the future. I was really excited when I saw this in my review parcel, but so disappointed. Get the 10" folks, if you haven't already. *(MH)*
DERANGED.

OUTBREAK - "Information Overload" CD.
Imagine if you will, ENDSTAND meeting up with SICK OF IT ALL. Oh with a dose of "emo" for good measure. Doesn't do it for me really but the sort of band I would probably go and see if they played the UK`s DIY scene, I can imagine them live, being great in a small space. Lots of energy but lacking slightly in the originality dept. Oh and the occasional over use of metal solos. It's the sort of thing you copy but don't buy, that weird middle ground. There is no forgiving the horrible inside photo of the band though. Lads, please. *(FU)*
ROCKSTAR,

OVERMARS / FUGUE - "Our Dreams Walking Their Way - Chapter 3" CD/ 50:34.
The packaging for this CD is awesome. Massive fold out sleeve, huge poster booklet, stylish graphics - it all looks incredible. It's a shame, however, that these two French metallic hardcore bands didn't put as much effort into their music as they did the artwork. Both acts play doomy and epic heavy-riff laden hardcore complete with ludicrous cookie monster vocals and grunting. There's nothing here to get very excited about - it's just more of the same the same the same the same… can't… take… it… anymore… *(JP)*
LABEL?

PANEL - "Along The Divide" CDEP/ 9:11.
On the back of their reputation as a blistering live proposition we have South Wales' PANEL. This EP crackles with the spirit of late 90's NYC post-hardcore such as QUICKSAND and HELMET also giving a nod to FUGAZI, HOT WATER MUSIC and SMALL BROWN BIKE along the way. This EP possesses all the raw physicality and rhythmic dynamism that you would associate with the masters of the genre, but this has been marred by a sub-par production job, which has not done these songs justice. *(TW)*
POISONED WHISKEY.

PAPER CUT OUT - "Rats!" 7".
Excellent debut disc from another gem in the North East's seemingly revitalised scene. PAPER CUT OUT capture the sharp middle-ground between raucous discords and jagged melody in all the right ways. Lead track "Rats!" kicks off with a hammered guitar chord that's soon joined by a counterplay of bass of drums that slots together like a broken jigsaw to form an infectiously fervent sound that blessed with more than a few buried hooks. Imagine a cross between SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY's spastic moments and the CAPITOL CITY DUSTERS' astutely poppy riffs and you're close enough to appreciate PAPER CUT OUT. Nice thick coloured vinyl makes it one for the appreciators too. *(RR)*
JEALOUS, PO Box 321, Leeds, LS6 3YT, UK

PAPERBACKS, THE - "An Episode of Sparrows" CD/ 56:32.
"An Episode of Sparrows" is the coolest name so things bode well for THE PAPERBACKS. In fact all the song names give a hint of the lyrical poetry to be found inside - like "I Suffer This Like a Dream", "Perpetrators of Art", "If I Make it Through the Winter" and "Raise a Styrofoam Cup". THE PAPERBACKS are from Winnipeg, which from THE PAPERBACKS' sound I imagine to be windswept and covered in snow. What is it about Canada and intelligent, soothing indie guitar? I know that's a sweeping and appalling generalisation but this sound is exemplified by THE WEAKERTHANS and followed up (or smoothed down) by people like PAINTED THIN and SIXTY STORIES. This is somewhere between those bands, and so of course it comes as no surprise that Doug McLean, the singer of the PAPERBACKS, was in PAINTED THIN. But hell, this is better. Unbelievable for a debut album, there's maturity of lyrics, confident vocals and a whole heap of "hits" - in the college rock sense. Not to mention the occasional piano, bells, glockenspiel and organ. This is a real treat. Make it through the winter with this! *(HE)*
NEWEST INDUSTRY, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK.

PATARENI - "Same" CD/ 41:06.
Very metal, as the back of Vivian from The Young Ones' jacket used to read. PATARENI play dark and scabby crustcore metal that treads a similar path to the brutally epic TRAGEDY, combining 'Master Of Puppets' era METALLICA and classic SLAYER and CELTIC FROST with the DIY anarcho-punk-come-metal approach of ANTI-SECT and AMEBIX. Better still, although PATARENI sound ambitious and powerful, they still manage to retain a raw, energetic edge that

reveals these metal demons punk hearts. *(MH)*
EPISTROPHY, PO Box 312, 30003 Hannover, Germany.

PATH OF DESTRUCTION - "1:00 am" 7".
Another good release here from this Minneapolis lot. Never really seeming to pick up any attention this for some unknown reason. A few years ago this lot had our locals going nuts. Really good fast dirty punk rock. Maybe a bit to fast for some people and it is pretty thrashy. This lot do however keep returning to a more simple punk beat, which works really well. They have a good sound going on and a very angry singer. The artwork and design of this record is pretty great. I really like it. Anyway all in all if you fancy taking a chance this lot are worth taking a look. Good stuff. *(FU)*
HAVOC.

PEACE OF MIND - "Values between 0 and 1" CD / 26:06.
Pretty chuffed to get this to review as I haven't heard anything from this lot in a while. The bass player Judith used to live here in Bristol, so good to know she's still keeping busy. What you get here is some really well delivered political punk with a great melodic edge. I don't really know what to compare this to, a friend said they come over like the French band LA FRACTION but I have no idea. All I know is this will definitely be getting repeated plays. One of those bands that doesn't really fit into the pop-punk scene and isn't going to really do it for thrashers, so I guess you could lump them in the awkward category. Not a bad thing and good to see this sort of music still carrying on. The lyrics are very well thought out and come across superbly over the music. Each song comes with an explanation as to what subject they are trying to address. There's also writing on the insert which are thought provoking. They even throw in a MARGINAL MAN cover for good measure, which is great. This is a really good slice of melodic punk and if you like female fronted bands, politics and that European slant on things you really should look out for this. *(FU)*
SCENE POLICE.

PEGGIO PUNX - "Discography" CD1/ 78:51 & CD2/ 78:06.
If you're into eighties Italian punk then congratulations, all your Christmases and Birthdays just came at once! Here we have a totally packed complete discography double CD of cult Italian punx PEGGIO PUNX and it rules! Back in the eighties, they'd gig regularly with the likes of RAW POWER, CCM and NEGAZOINE so you can imagine the kind of snotty, lo-fi raw hardcore punk you're going to get here. Sure, it's rough and messy as fuck but there's an attitude and freshness here that's completely infectious. Ok, two CD's full to bursting point might be more than most can handle but then you'd be a complete nutter to try and listen to this all in one go. Dip in, blast some tracks, go nuts, then come back to it for some more a few days later. Classic stuff. *(JP)*
SOA, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio, 67/69 00146, Roma, Italy.

PENNYWISE - "From The Ashes" CD/ 41:10.
When I was in LA recently, I knew this was coming out. *"How, Monk? How did you know?"* - well their adverts were on every bench at every bus stop for an endless number of miles along Sunset Blvd. It was really quite amazing to see just how much money goes into a band like this around their own locale. Anyway… I used to love PENNYWISE, their first album was great and considering their staying power, I think they have done a lot of really good records… but… something is definitely tailing off now. This record did not hold my interest as much as their others have done, and it's certainly no "About Time". I've even found myself turning it off with a tiresome look on my face (I checked in the mirror)… there's definitely some motions that are being gone through here, or maybe it's just me? Maybe I got old or something. Still, this will sell absolutely tons, and plus it comes with a pretty interesting DVD which can't be bad, right? It's okay… it's not as bad as when BAD RELIGION fucked up a la "The New America", but it's definitely lacking "something". *(MD)*
EPITAPH.

PHINIUS GAGE- "More Haste More Speed" CD/ 26:10.
A shit band name hides awesome music behind its deceptive moniker. A fast and melodic album of poppy hardcore with hooks and harmonies, mixing both seriousness and fun-time sensibilities. This album deals with issues as diverse as straight edge fascism, personal epiphany, and a bloke called Mick who hasn't puked for ten years…it's all on here and it all sounds fucking good! But seriously, get a new band name because this one sounds like the name of some village idiot from an outdated Westerner with a tattoo of the confederate flag on one arm and a picture of a snake wrapped around a sword on the other. *(DM)*
DECK CHEESE, 49 Muswell Hill, London, N10 3PN

PHOENIX FOUNDATION, THE - "These Days" CD/ 24:50.
Heard a lot of folks raving on about this Finnish outfit, but this is the first time for me. Do I like? Well yes, and I can fully appreciate any band that seems to have certain sound elements of ARTICLES OF FAITH, MOVING TARGETS, early HUSKER DU, and at times, manage to combine all three into one… which is when things really become interesting. High octane, explosive and impassioned melodic hardcore with those special little hooks that may fly by at first, but upon further listens, just ooze out of their wall of sound and wet-slap you about the chops. "Clouded Eyes" is the absolute stand-out track for me and reminds me of why I loved punk rock in the first place, a very special song indeed with all the finest ingredients that make a punk rock song stand out. I have to admit, this took a few plays to appreciate, but right now I can't stop listening to it, it's a killer deal from start to finish (no bad pun intended - honest guv'). The band may take inspiration from a golden age, but this is far from "dated" or a pale imitation of aforementioned bands. It just gets me to thinking, what the fuck has happened to "punk rock" over the past few years? Fuck fashion, this would have been a great record in 1984, 1994 and will be in 2004. Great music is timeless… the rest, well fashion's cool, and fashion sells… but it's fly by night and throwaway and if punk rock is so throwaway… well, what the fuck am I doing here twenty plus years down the line then? Nah, the good stuff is with you for life. This CD has just reminded me of that fact. What a great band… now where's my RATTUS vinyl? *(DS)*
NEWEST INDUSTRY, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UK.

PLANET SMASHERS, THE - "No Self Control" CD/ 37:34.
Apparently these guys are one of Canada's premier ska-bands. The Golf press blurb on the inside of this disc can't stress enough that this is their "darker sounding CD with sarcasm, wit and irony". I can't stress enough that I don't give two fucks for Canada's premier ska band, and that by darker they must mean only the mood this crap puts me in, by sarcasm, wit and irony, they must surely mean that somehow this is all a horrible joke about how lame ska-music is and really perhaps they are a great hardcore band or something doing this wimp-rock guff for the shits and giggles? Or maybe the irony lies in how they sing a song called "Wish I Were American" and, I am an American, and when I have to hear this wank I wish I were dead? Regular readers might notice that this is one of my darker sounding reviews, with sarcasm, wit and irony. Fuck the off-beat. Ska can suck my cock and feltch cum out of my ass. *(DM)*
GOLF, PO Box 6, Walingford, D.O, OX10 9FB, UK

PLAYWRIGHTS, THE - "Good Beneath The Radar" CD/ 60:02.
These guys are really interesting and sound like a cross between co-ACADEMY MORTICIANS frontman Simon Mastrantone's solo work and the CARDIACS whilst they dip their toes in early NO MEANS NO and for some reason I want to say FUGAZI's more melodic moments… all with a slight folk tinged, almost PULP sounding edge to the music too and moments that sound like the WICKERMAN soundtrack's creepier tunes. I really like this. It is absolutely fucked-up and innovative in a way that grabs the listener and makes them take note that this isn't yet another prefab clone band trying to cash in on a marketable sound, but a band comfortable to make their own music and a sound they can be proud of. Definitely worth picking this up if you are bored of dusty generica and want something different. *(DM)*
SINK AND STOVE, PO Box 992, Bristol, BS99 3ZL, UK

PLEDGE ALLIANCE - "Trummer Einer Zerborslenen Welt" CD/ 21:39.
Firstly, I don't know if that's the correct title for the CD as it was hard to make the writing out, especially since it's in German. PLEDGE ALLIANCE is really good, they have a mixture of bombastic metallic hardcore that rips apart anything that crosses it's path. Then there are more mellow, sombre, eerie acoustic type parts that give the listener time to breath only to be devoured by the metallic rage again. They really remind me of ZEGOTA and the connection with that band seems to go further. They've obviously been inspired by the CATHARSIS, HARBINGER, CRIMETHINC work horse and all it's revolutionary thought. The political lyrics really go well with the music, you've got the incendiary metallic thrash for throwing petrol bombs and the mellow stuff for thinking about your direct action. Really excellent artwork accompanies this CD, naked women and a skeleton playing a fiddle (no doubt the dance of death?). Cool CD. *(MH)*
ERDKAMPF STYLE, Brucknerstr. 24, A-8010 Graz, Austria.

PN - "The Art Of Being We" CD/ 24:59.
Oh dear. While you have to applaud some bands for having the guts to take their music in more than one direction and not just settle for a one-dimensional approach, it's no good being 'eclectic' if half of your music sounds great and your other direction totally sucks. The oddly named PN suffer from this exact problem. Some of the time they sound riff-heavy and abrasive, then they decide to sound like some speccy student college rock band. Pretty shit all round, truth be told. *(JP)*
FUNTIME, Vlasselaar 13, 3221 Nieuwrode (Holsbeek), Belgium.

POINTING FINGER - "Transcend" 7".
Talk about a cheesy name from this ripping Portuguese band, but I won't slag them off as they are so fucking good. 6 songs of fast, while having a melodic sensibility, youth-crew styled hardcore. They have the urgency of UNIFORM CHOICE/VITAMIN X, YOUTH OF TODAY and MINOR THREAT's style and the beauty of DAGNASTY all wrapped up in 7"s of pure hardcore. I love the fast thrash of it, but 'Cast Of A Thousand Fools' does win me over the most and funny enough it's the most melodic of the lot. The lyrics definitely complement the awesome music, covering topics such as war, sexuality, inspiration and more - explanations of the songs are included too. It's all wrapped up in excellent packaging and its another exceptional release on Commitment Records - just love it. *(MH)*
COMMITMENT.

POLIKARPA Y SUS VICIOSAS - Self Titled 7".
Wow this is excellent. 6 really ace songs from this Colombian band, who cross LOS CRUDOS, NEGAZIONE and NAKED AGGRESSION to come up with an explosive and wicked 7". Dual male/female vocals that are a treat, and with the mostly fast music we have some totally incendiary hardcore crust here folks. I can imagine Colombia being a real shit country to live in, so for a punk band it must be pretty crummy to say the least. So it's real special when you see something like this appearing. As you'd expect anti government lyrics that deal with the harsh brutal regime inflicted upon the people who live there. Really great 7", make sure it's on your Santa list. *(MH)*
FILTH EAR, Tim Leten, Minervastraat 14, 2640 Mortsel, Belgium.

POUNDAFLESH - "Cry From The People" 7".
Great band, great EP, great hard hitting political punk rock and yet sadly I feel they are not well know enough for my liking. This is four tracks of total punk, totally DIY and the classic EP package. Kids starting out in the world of punk should forget MTV; all those shiny punk acts backed by major labels and reject that shite. They'll get their POUNDAFLESH when they screw you for fifteen quid a CD in HMW. Get your POUNDAFLESH here. *(GS)*
POUNDAFLESH, 25 St Thomas Road, Normanton, Derby, DE23 8RF

PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES - Self Titled CDEP/ 12:10.
"3 Away" opens with thumping drums and screechy male vocals between softer female singing, introducing you straight on to the typical PGMG sound. Andrea takes the chorus sounding like Allison from DISCOUNT and there's great interplay between erratic guitars, melodic bass lines and mixed shouting / singing male / female vocals. Supposedly, the next best thing since AT THE DRIVE IN, PGMG play energetic, less brutal chaos that's easy on the eyes and ears. This is the new breed of indie rock and it shouts youth, passion and power. "Modern Day Emma Goldman", "Liquid Courage" and "Head South" are more of the same, with "Liquid Courage" sounding like the best of SLEATER-KINNEY and including some pretty funky cool emo guitars. *(HE)*
DIM MAK, PO Box 14041 Santa Barbara, CA, 93107, USA.

PROJECT MORK - Self Titled CD/ 25:35.
Nine songs of youthful energy here. Starts off on a good Hardcore blaster with `Target Audience` then gets steadily more into the whole current sound of bands that I tend to not be that interested in. There's a stack of them here in Bristol. Young kids having a great laugh and if you're part of their local scene its probably a top night out when they play live. Sadly I've no idea where this lot are from and can't get their sense of humour due to lack of lyrics. Poppy punk with the odd hardcore bit and they incorporate Ska on a few occasions which at one point reminded me of CITIZEN FISH. Usually I'll avoid "Ska-core" and this is no different. This is not a bad release it's just not what I'm really going to listen to given a choice. As for the cover of some stoned M+M`s on a sofa. Hmmm. *(FU)*
GRATUITOUS BEAVER, The Old Parish Hall, The Street, Trowse, Norwich, NR14 8SX, UK.

PSEUDO HEROES - "Prison of Small Perception" CD/ 42:22.
A kick-ass experiment in punk rock diversity here as the band hook up with folk like John Stabb, Blaine Cook, Dave Smalley, Jerry A, Lee Dorrian, and Chris Barrows to produce an eclectic and "schizophrenic release" that is a joy to listen to. Conforming to no genre conventions or specific this-core or that-core, each song is a different style from the last to form an album that truly stands out as different and exciting. The songs are all good too, and quality is not lost just to try and prove a point, instead, the point is proved by being correct…there can be so much that can come from punk rock, and it doesn't have to be a bunch of FAT-WRECK bands or a bunch of BYO bands etc, it can be anything and everything. A commendable idea and a tremendous release. *(DM)*
GO KART, PO Box 20, Prince St. Station, NYC, 10012, USA.

PUNKLES, THE - "Beat The Punkles" CD/ 34:46.
German band here, playing BEATLES covers in a RAMONES style. It's easy listening, it's good for a listen or two, but ultimately, covering one of the world's most boring bands in the style of a band who are equally as dull… well. Now don't get me wrong, I like some BEATLES (later period stuff) and I can listen to three or four RAMONES songs in one sitting… but 17 obvious versions of songs I've heard too many times before… well fuck that for a game of soldiers. Thirty-five minutes in solitary confinement would prove more valuable to me than playing this again. Humour German style, wunderbar. *(DS)*
BITZCORE, PO Box 30 41 07, D-20324, Hamburg, GERMANY.

PURE CULTIVATION - "DSB" 7".
Three tracks of raw hard and fast raging hardcore. They've a mixture of old CHAOS UK, DISCHARGE, GAUZE, etc. down to a tee. Excellent quality to boot. I can't really say much, other than it's a great 7" and fast crusty hardcore and nothing but the best appears on Kangaroo Records. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

RADIO ZERO - Self Titled 10".
Swampy Garage Rocking from Italy that has me casting my mind back to late Seventies / early Eighties Australia, and a legion of the wild unbridled Psychedelic-tinged neo-Rock 'n Rollers like THE FUN THINGS, SCIENTISTS, (early) HOODOO GURUS, LIME SPIDERS… some of my favourite music, ever… so top job RADIO ZERO, I'll be tuning in again regularly. *(PC)*
AREA PIRATA.

RAISED FIST - "Dedication" CD / 35:49.
I had heard this bands name around for a while but never actually heard them so I was chuffed when I got this for review. I have to say I was expecting this to be decent and I wasn't let down. Totally raging stripped down Hardcore from the word Go!. This lot remind me of bands like MAINSTRIKE and DEAD STOOL PIGEON. The lyrics seem to follow a similar line to the aforementioned bands as well and the opening song "Get This Right!" is a stormer. This band has a lot to get pissed off about but still manage to keep it all sounding pretty "posi" something I've never been able to manage myself. You get eleven songs on here none of which are filler. I find this style of hardcore can become boring after a while but not with this little disc. Top notch energy from beginning to end and full of fury which sets them apart from a lot of the other mediocre bands out there in Europe. I can imagine a lot of finger pointing and circle pits at RAISED FIST gigs. The downside to this is the packaging and art. Pretty naff and I have no idea what the front cover is meant to be. Looks like a blurred computer. keyboard I think. Oh yeah and the nice promo photo on their website I could've done without. Minor grumbles aside this is good gear and worth giving a try. *(FU)*
BURNING HEART.

RAMESES III - "Folk Hymns" CD/ 22:44.
This is special, softly spoken singing over a sublime backdrop of picked acoustic strings and haunting effects, this has a very natural and honest vibe that draws you in. It does remind me of a very melancholy Richard Thompson, that is hardly a bad thing by any means. A soothing, mesmerising and extremely enjoyable collection of songs, imaginative and soulful, daring and beautiful. It's hard to believe this band feature ex-TOAST front man Spencer Grady, he's as mad as a bag of rats, but behind the lunacy and underneath that truckers mesh cap, lies a very intelligent, talented and clever individual. Have they created alt-folk here? Wicked disc. *(DS)*
FIREFLY, PO Box 30179, London, E17 5FE, UK.

RAW POWER - "You Are The Victim" CD/ 23:42.
Unless you are pretty dedicated to uncovering punk rock history and bands you might not have come across this lot before or at least these recordings. RAW POWER along with their other Italian contemporaries like WRETCHED, NEGAZIONE, DECLINO and INDIGESTI were and still are some of the best raw hardcore bands to have come out of Europe. Compare this stuff to the other bands around in 1983 / '84 and you'll know that RAW POWER were on top of their game and helping to set new standards for others to follow. The quality of the music on here isn't exactly what you get these days and the word "Raw" suits it perfectly. The vocals from Mauro are screamed out like it's the blokes last breath and you can tell he's really shredding those chords in that throat getting the words out. The music is firmly rooted in punk rock but they speeded it up so much it blended into what would now be termed as "hardcore". From the opening song "Politicians" the whole CD oozes anger at the system and makes the listener get pissed off and want to do something about it. Even if it's just smashing your bedroom up!. The lyrics are top notch and you just have to read "State Oppression" or "No Card" to see what I mean. This CD was originally released on vinyl but limited to several hundred copies only (a collectors dream), hence this re-issue so many years later and although a bit ropey production wise this is a landmark. If you are even slightly interested in this you should definitely check out their more available LP "Screams From the Gutter" which is another hardcore milestone, with much better production it sold somewhere in the region of 40,000 copies and will crush you. Also included on this disc are a lot of "extra's" with some photo's, screensavers, interviews and some really early video's. Basically if you have any interest in the history of European punk you should check this out. Sheer Class. *(FU)*
SOULFORCE,

RASHIT - "Kapak Guzelleri" LP.
Check it out, Punk rock from Turkey, and that's definitely a first for me, so I'm psyched to be hearing this album. Yeah, okay, it could be worthless shit, right, but it isn't. Each song is structured around simplistic buzzsaw guitars, a rock solid drum 'n bass section, and semi-hoary melodic vocals. They're a tight unit, but not clinical and constrictive, an air of YOUTH BRIGADE to these lads. This is out as a split release on label's from France, Switzerland and Turkey, so all the lyrics are handily reproduced on the inner sheet in Turkish, French and English. And it's evidence that Punk minded folk the world over are disillusioned with their respective countries State Controlled Media, are critically aware that the rich are getting richer… and the rest of us aren't. And we don't just want to live the life of a wage slaves. Opening song "Cok Mu Zor?" ("Is it Hard to Do it?") raises the question I often ask myself, why can't the people of the Israel / Palestine TRY to get on in their Little Land for a bit. And how much longer will the revenge killings, and counter revenge killings, and counter-counter… blahblahblah… go on… *"No-one can go anywhere with these empty heads, the borders are just on the maps on the wall"*. My appreciation of Punk Bands hasn't ever been tainted by Countries and Borders either. Check this out if you chance across a copy *(PC)*
TOLGA OZBEY.

REAL LOSERS, THE - "Time To Lose" LP.
Raw dogging Garage Action from a Leeds trio, whose Pink Vinyl 12 inch is omitting a trashed and fuzzed sonic assault on my airwaves. A riotous fusion of STOOGES / DEAD BOYS mayhem, and a singer who spews and drawls like THE SAINTS Chris Bailey (circa Brisbane '75)… well alright! For a modern day equivalent, crazy Japanese GUITAR WOLF (who are 'blessed' in the credits) have a similar full-tilt action pact approach for paying homage to REAL PUNK'n'ROLL. You know what I'm saying. Ace Sounds. Come and play Brighton sometime! *(PC)*
SQUIRREL, PO Box 481, Leeds LS5 3TH, UK.

RED CHORD, THE - "Fused Together In Revolving Doors" CD/ 30:01.
This fits in perfectly with all those bands trying to do the DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN thing at the moment which seems to have taken off over the last few years. Technical on all fronts, and enough time changes and off kilter bits to keep all the nerdy metal muso's happy. The singer has a pretty good voice and can do the cookie monster one minute and then turn into a screeching banshee the next. That we like. Lots of blast beats and thunderous drumming to keep this rolling along nicely with the occasional pause in proceedings for a bit of mellow guitar work before once more trying to smash your face in. Not sure about the noise fade out at the end of proceedings and the art work is a bit on the non-descript side. However this CD is more than capable at what it does. The only problem being is that unless you're a huge fan of this genre then like me it'll just be another release which albeit better than average won't be very memorable. If you like your metal to the fore this'll keep you pleased, oh and the lyrics to the title track are quite apt considering the recent GREAT WHITE gig/disaster in the states! *(FU)*
ROBOTIC EMPIRE.

RED HOT VALENTINES, THE - "Calling off Today" CDEP/ 10:46.
Charming, slightly predictable hook-laden college pop from Illinois here. They have indie rock vox, obligatory Moog and songs about sunshine. There's also a really horrendous guitar solo on the title track, but the other two tracks "Firecracker" and "Don't bother" are less cliched; in fact the latter is almost GAMEFACE-ish. So I'm not writing this band off yet. It's only a single after all! *(HE)*
POLYVINYL.

REVILLOS, THE - "The Jungle Of Eyes" CD/ 51:27.
This is a re-issue from 1984 and man oh man… this is sooo 80's it's scary! Sounds like BANANARAMA meets the B52's . Saying that, there are some cool pop songs on here… "Guilty in the first degree" and "Bitten by a love bug" both of which, could be the soundtrack to a John Hughes movie. Yeah, it's cheesy, it's over-blown and dated to hell, but it's enjoyable enough if you take it for what it is. It's possibly so bad that it's great, well not great… but you know what I mean. I think my good friend Adz *"the belly"* Smith would enjoy this. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN OI! PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

REYNOLDS - "Love Songs" CD/ 50:14.
Total SLINT and GODSPEED worship here from post rockers REYNOLDS. "Love Songs" has everything you could hope for from a record like this, and more. Sometimes it's jagged and jarring, others it's soft and smoothing - all bonded together with a crisp and clean production that drives each sound and movement home. Good stuff. *(JP)*
ERROL, 1 Denston Drive, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 6YP, UK.

RIFFS, THE - "Death or Glory" CD/ 35:35.
Once I stopped laughing at the ridiculous band picture that adorns the front of this album and actually put it on I found it to be strangely enjoyable punk and roll, with a really nice vibe to it and even some bits where I had to muster all my self-control not to jump up and have a dance…the reason I resisted of course was because I was on my own, and it is odd to dance on your own. I'll be honest, I didn't want to like this album because it looked so fucking clichéd, but against my prejudiced judgement the good tunes and fun time rock and roll feel couldn't help but win me over. I hold my hands up in defeat, this is good. *(DM)*
TKO, 3126 W.Cary Street #303, Richmond, VA, 23221, USA

RIFU - "Dead End Street" CD/ 53:47.
Anti-capitalist and damn proud of it, the cover art, lyrics, and liner notes are fantastic on this release, but what of the music? Does it meet the grade of its packaging or is it an ironic case of style over substance? The answer is luckily yes, as captivating and heavy melodic hardcore is the weapon of choice to kick capitalism's crawling carcass to the proverbial curb and these guys do it well with atmosphere and feeling that is almost apocalyptic in its feeling, yet at the same time full of hope. Closing track "You can't beat the feeling can you?" is my favourite but it's all good on this wonderful, wonderful disc. *(DM)*
RIFU MUSIC, www.rifu.net

RING CICADA - "Good Morning, Mr. Good" CD/ 40:48.
Why can't all indie-rock be this good? Bringing to mind a more together, mid period FLAMING LIPS or PAVEMENT at their most "prog" this, Albini produced / recorded / whatever album, really does impress. At times it meanders in a fashion not really heard since SLINT finally hung their guitars up for good, with guitar and bass deftly weaving and intertwining around the complex, undulating rhythms. Albini's presence here means that you can almost feel the room in which the musicians are playing, which is always a good thing. *(TW)*
54' 40' OR FIGHT!, PO Box 1601, Acme, MI 49610, USA.

R`N`R - "I've Had It" 7".
Ok bear with me hear, this band may have opted for a truly dire name and when I put the needle on the record, heard the opening chords and got a bit worried I must admit. Starts off on some rock intro, which I thought was going to lead to bad things. Wrong! When "I've had it" kicks in you'd bet-

ter hope you're not stood next to anything of value as you will start going nuts. Full speed ahead thrash played at a furious pace. Taking elements from bands like POISON IDEA and BLACK FLAG this lot hammer out two totally catchy yet aggro as hell songs. The lyrics to "I've had it" are superb and if you're pissed off with things slam this on and you'll be ready to fight in no time. There is nothing complicated about this, nothing more brutal than anyone else and nothing exceptionally "new" but who the fuck cares when it's as powerful and raw as this. Ok so you only get two songs which I think is a bit cheeky but I'll let them off. Blazing stuff. Definitely worth picking up. *(FU)*
DEADALIVE, PO Box 42593, Philadelphia, PA 19101, USA.

ROCKY VOLATO - "Light And Sound" CDEP/ 16:09.
A fine, four track, collection of wistful acoustic melancholy from the former WAXWING front man. Ably assisted and produced by DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE's Chris Walla this is a fine introduction to the genius of punk rock renaissance man, ROCKY VOLATO. As beautiful a collection of songs as you can wish to find. Now does anyone want to sell me some WAXWING records? *(TW)*
SECOND NATURE, PO Box 413084, Kansas City, MO 64141-3084, USA.

RUDIO - Self Titled 7".
After a couple of split 7"s, RUDIO finally grace their own - on a German label too. 8 mad as fuck songs, of fast hardcore noise - keeping the flag burning in the vein of LARM, NEOS, INFEST, NO COMMENT and DROPDEAD. Some negative and positive lyrics to chew the fat on. Cool 7". *(MH)*
POWER IT UP, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, Germany.

RUFIO - "1985" CD/ 35:57.
This sounds like LAGWAGON gone "nu-emo". This band is fucking huge in Southern California, but then some Americans also think their food is better than ours and that "guns rawk dude" so you can't really blame them for having such a poor taste in music, right? When this band slows down they sound exactly like that other band - total bollocks. *(MD)*
NITRO.

RUNAMUCKS - "On The Brink" LP.
Finally! I get to hear these guys. 12 songs in as many minutes, on this 12" vinyl and wow, what a scorcher it is. Super fast hardcore, like DRI, but without the metal. Keep thinking of early Boston core like JERRYS KIDS and old GANG GREEN (say their first 7"). Just incredible. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

RUNNING LIKE THIEVES - "The Approval Of The Crowd" CD/ 10:43.
First things out of the way, RUNNING LIKE THIEVES features a couple of SUPERTOUCH members and Matt who used to sing in CRIPPLED YOUTH / BOLD. Even though I totally love all that youth crew stuff from the 80's (by the way this sounds nothing like any of it) I never really liked Super-touch's 7", though did like their song on the Rev comp LP. I've always thought the CRIPPLED YOUTH 7" is great, which I still play, but the BOLD LP is not and which I very rarely play (ok, if someone raves on about it, then I'll try and convince my self I'm wrong, but hey I'm always right regarding that LP). I really like the BOLD 7" and their song "Running Like Thieves" is superb and that I guess is where this band gets their name. RUNNING LIKE THIEVES are like UNDERDOG stripped of any of their reggae bits, and add a little GUNS'N'ROSES, W.A.S.P. (but take away both these bands catchy and coolest riffs) and you are left with a CD called "The Approval Of The Crowd". It's not that I dislike this, maybe I haven't grown up, but these songs are for you when you stop listening to hardcore (though still like the odd song) and start listening to rock and metal. If you want to approval of the crowd then you're going to have to do more than this. *(MH)*
LIVEWIRE, Darfelder Str. 3148727, Billerbeck, Germany.

RUTH'S HAT - "The Hitchhiker's Guide to Rock and Roll CD/ 31:12.
Nice pop punk'n'roll here from (I think, judging from the live photo) Canada. Hooks, harmonies and all that good stuff in a well-produced (Mass Giorgini mastered it) package that, whilst breaking no new ground or pushing any musical boundaries, delivers some fantastic melody-driven music. *(DM)*
FAST MUSIC, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT 06520, USA.

S PRCSS - "MNML" CD/ 45:38.
I ws tmptd t wrt th rvw lk ths bt ts gd. And deserves some proper vowels. S PRCSS play dark, brooding retro/indie rock that loops guitars and thumps drums intensely, and takes turns at being electronic and abtuse. Lyrics seem to be an afterthought, like on "Hi-Yah is a karate chop", or intended to intimidate, like on "Spring garden drive-by". "This geometric is written is:" is vaguely CURE-ish, while "Altitude is sickness" is vaguely SWEEP-ish. This CD is powerful. *(HE)*
FRENCH KISS, 111 East 14th Street, PMB229, New York, NY 10003, USA.

SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME - "All Your Summer Songs" CD/ 39:05.
Fred Thomas, once of HIS NAME IS ALIVE, has assembled a huge and happy cast of characters to polish off this compilation of 60s style summer hits. TARA JANE O'NEILL and TED LEO are among eleven singers making an appearance, and the seventeen musicians combine skills on a mellotron, a flute, pianos, saxophones, violins and more. Surprisingly light, given the layers, the tracks bounce from mellow and sigh-inducing to upbeat and charming, with either sugary female or sonorous male vocals. "Alcohol", a highlight, swings and spins like girls at yesteryear's prom, while lyrics are slightly surreal. I've given up trying to predict what Polyvinyl releases will sound like - this is Detroit-esque Spector pop for the indie BRAID crowd and totally worth checking out. *(HE)*
POLYVINYL, PO Box 7140, Champaign, Il 61826-7140, USA.

SCALENE - "Grafting From Instantaneous And Fragmental Fulfillment" CD/ 18:36.
Thick. Dense. Suffocating. These are all words that suit SCALENE, a band that mix quirky math rock with wedges of brutal MASTODON and KEELHAUL style technical metal. First track 'Under Cover' knocks the fucking wind out of you with its sheer, all out heaviness and from then on, SCALENE lay on four tracks in less than twenty minutes of world-weary sonic noise. And they lay it on thick. *(JP)*
H.G. FACT.

SCARS OF TOMMORROW - "Design Your Fate" CD/ 32:15.
Brutal metallic HC lurking somewhere between ENTOMBED and BONESAW. Down tuned sludgy guitars, precision riffing and a deep grunted vocal style. Despite its winning recipe however, this it is agonisingly one dimensional and eventless. I keep waiting for one guitar to break off somewhere else or something interesting to happen but it never does. Maybe Thorp does release the odd turkey then. Booooring. *(SM)*
THORP, PO Box 6786 Toledo, OH 43612, USA.

SCHMERZ - " Totes Metall" CD / 23:23.
Germanic thrash attack! No idea what this lot are on about seeing as the lyrics are in German. I will just take them on musical talent then. Well if you lived through the 80's and then moved into tape trading territory for your dose of metal and grind etc then you'll have come across stuff like this before. Not the greatest production and not the more amazing thing you are going to hear this week but not bad for what it is. A whole heap of metallic Hardcore with a good set of dual male/female vocals giving it something to get them noticed. The sort of band I'd go and see live but probably not listen too much at home. *(FU)*
SCHMERZ.

SECOND RATE / FLYING DONUTS - "This Machine Kills Emo Kids" CD/ 28:35.
I hate split CD's... they just don't work for me. The two bands just blend together into some weird disjointed merge of styles and the result is that neither leave a particular impression on you. This suffers from exactly that. Both bands on the disc sound kind of similar so you don't really notice the change from one to the other and then all you're left with is an impression of everlasting mediocrity. FLYING DONUTS have a slightly heavier sound than SECOND RATE, and the vocals have a slightly different accent to them respectively... but ultimately this is just two bands playing similarly underwhelming power-pop-punk-rock that maintained my interest less than the yellow paint drying in my mate's redecorated lounge. *(DM)*
SANJAM, 9 Rue Des Mesanges, 35650, Le Rheu, France.

SEDITION - "End In The Beginning, Beginning In The End" CD/ 79:32.
In case you didn't know, this is the band's discography - bar the split 7" with DISAFFECT, so with that out of the way - on with the show. SEDITION, from Scotland, were a such an incredible band and along with their native DISAFFECT and OI POLLOI were major sound tracks to my life during the 90's and continue to warm this old heart reminding me that there are caring people in the world. Musically they were a cross between SIEGE and DROPDEAD - yeah a true blast of raging hardcore crust. Ferocious guitar licks, monstrous heavy bass lines, thundering drumming and the bellowing cries of anger, love, frustration and peace. It's like that from start to finish, with the beauty of an array of atmospheric drumming, chants and other bits n bobs. The sound quality is just perfect, as is this CD. Contained are their "Earthbeat" LP, split LP with PINK TURDS IN SPACE, "Dealing With Clichés" EP and their first demo from 1988. If that's not enough, it's all displayed in a pretty amazing and beautiful booklet. Al the lyrics, explanations, artwork etc is here for you to enjoy and make you angry. Their love earth, it's inhabitants and dislike for fucked up modern society (and all the fucked up isms in it) is still spell bounding. If you've sunk into mediocrity and have forgotten how incredible this were, then look no further it's only £5 post paid, a small price to buy back your self respect. *(MH)*
FLAT EARTH, Box Flat Earth, 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK.

SETBACKS, THE - "Good Run of Bad Luck" CDEP/ 6:31.
This poppy punk CD has some fantastic tunes with great and soaring vocal melodies going on, but this whole EP is marred by a poor production that sees these vocals just a pinch too loud in the mix, making them a little bit annoying, and with the guitars and drums so quiet as to almost be an afterthought, the songs loose their power. It's a shame, because with a bit of tweaking at the mixing desk this could have been top-notch because the songs are obviously there, despite whoever recorded this thing trying to hide it. See them live and wait for the next release. *(DM)*
TPT, www.thesetbacks.co.uk

SETTLEFISH - Self Titled CD/ 54:39.
Now this is some good shit, right here. Take the expansive sound-scaping of JUNO or APPLESEED CAST and combine it with the intensity and aggression of SMALL BROWN BIKE or AT THE DRIVE IN and you'll have some idea of the forces at work here. Mixing hypnotic bass-lines with clashing guitar lines, feed back, powerful, yet subtle, drum work and some in your face vocals SETTLEFISH seem to have it all. The songs ebb and flow, gently lilting one moment, crushingly brutal the next, in an almost oceanic fashion. Lulling you into a false sense of relaxation, before jarring you to your senses with the next assault. A fantastic record. *(TW)*
DEEP ELM, Post Box 36939 Charlotte, NC, 28236, USA.

SHAI HULUD - "That Within Blood Ill-Tempered" CD / 38:55.
Sadly this is just what I expect from Revelation records these days. A blend of metal, emo and rock. A per usual I lose interest after the fast / tough bit transcends to some bloke going all emotional and trying to whine on like PROMISE RING. If you can imagine a tragic blend of SICK OF IT ALL and FARSIDE you'll be getting close. Granted this lot are musically clever and can play very well. The problem is they are sadly lacking in the originality dept. and are nothing more than wallpaper in the great scheme of things. *(FU)*
REVELATION.

SHLEBIE - Self Titled CD/ 28:47.
Erm, I think this was put in my review box by accident. If you are a fan of bands on labels like Slampt then this might do for you. ME, however, I find it all pretty tedious. Aside from current noisemakers BILGE PUMP most of this arty punk stuff goes straight over my head. You know the routine, clever drums, quirky guitar and a bassist who can play every chord backwards in his sleep. Great in theory but seldom do any of these bands bring anything interesting into my world. Yes it's all very clever but then so was PINK FLOYD and you don't catch me listening to that either. *(FU)*
BIG DEAL, 41 Killermont Road, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 2JB, UK.

SHOCK TREATMENT - "So Many Little Things" CD 31:07.
You know, I think these fellas might just have heard SHELLAC? Not that that's a bad thing but the spirit of Albini floats over the entirety of this record, like a bespectacled, "ghost of noise rock past". Which isn't to say that this is just another Albini rip-off, far from it. This record crackles with energy and jazzy time changes, which bring to mind the likes of THE MINUTEMEN, FIREHOSE and NOMEANSNO all allied to a dedication to unruly noise that would make Mr. Albini proud. *(TW)*
RUMBLE FISH, Via Guisti 93-72015, Fasano (BR), Italy.

SHOE - "Don't Shoot Your Firearms In Celebration" CD/ 21:03.
Exeter has a healthy and impressive record of coming up with melodic guitar bands and these fellas continue that legacy. Kinda punky but with a little something different in the mix. This nifty little 7-tracker showcases a young band with an ear for writing good songs, the sound is somewhere between BLOCKO and (early) DUGONG. The songs flit from riffing guitar rock-age to a more introspective and reserved style. The guitars are really impressive, not sure if the production does them

any favours mind you. With a little more power and cutting edge I think this would be a much better record. Vocals are a little unsteady at times, but these guys are certainly capable of bettering themselves I'm sure. For a (I think) first record, this is good stuff and I can imagine they'd be an impressive live act. *"What we see and what we know"* is a great song. Very impressive and a name to take note of... even if it is a crap name for a band! Oh, just found out that their drummer is in BULLET UNION who are pretty smart themselves, and fuck can this guy drum. *(DS)*
FREAKSCENE c/o The Cavern, 83-84 Queen Street, Exeter, EX4 3RP, UK.

SHOOTIN' GOON - "Left for Dead" CD/ 12:50.
Shit Dave, you know I'm not a ska-punk fan, why gimmie this stuff to review? Actually, to be honest this isn't bad at all, in fact, they have been and still are, one of the best bands of the genre. They've been at this game long enough to know the score and that's reflected in the sussed lyrics and attitude they convey. The songs are well thought out, they manage to retain their identity and the brass work is imaginative. I may have preconceived thoughts on the whole "ska punk" issue, but I'm the first to hold my hands up and admit when a band does the near impossible, pulls it off and makes it palatable to my tastes. This is a strong EP from a label that clearly has taste and a mission to showcase the best bands in Wales. Fuck me, this is ska-punk, it's superb, and you don't know how much it pains me to say that! One to get. *(DS)*
GOOD CLEAN FUN, 48 Cardigan road, Haverfordwest, SA61 2QN, UK.

SHORTCUT TO NEWARK - "Head In Hands, Heart In Half" 7" & CDEP/ 15:28.
Great debut from these guys, four songs of exquisite pop/rock punk with big tunes and some great guitar playing which just puts a smile on your face. I still think the PYLON reference is valid, although these guys are a lot more controlled and rock based, whereas PYLON push boundaries with their song writing innovation. STN mix up sweet pop harmonies with some real big rock-out moments. Both guitarists take on vocal duties to good effect, as this really breaks things up, which is what this style needs as it can become a little stale pretty quickly. My only query is the pace, OK, so this is a first effort and there is absolutely no criticism here, but all four songs are at a similar pace and you just have to think how amazing they would be if they pulled off a couple of faster numbers, a ballad, a real rock out session... they could be the most amazing band. "Souvenir" has some fantastic THIN LIZZY style guitar leads and having seen them live a few times over this past year, they are a guitar band and have the potential to rock like beasts. This is a smart debut release though, and I can't wait for a full-length album, especially if they mix things up a little and loosen up, these songs are played in a very mechanized and set way... I say let 'em flow and to hell with it. Great band, a fine start... this rocks. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

SICBAY - "Overreaction Time" CD/ 32:07.
Moody and labouring Indie Rock vibrations from this Minneapolis trio - songs are edgy and deep, plied high with atmospherics, and a certain latter day WIPERS twang. The deadpan vocals and minimalist breaks take on occasional Nick Cave curvature. You would not want to listen to this music if having a melancholic turn and feeling down on your luck. Life could seem eternally bleak. But it's not an entirely convincing CD. And I'd rather be reminded that the world is facing cataclysmic Armageddon by listening to TRAGEDY *(PC)*
FIFTY FOUR FORTY OR FIGHT!

SICK OF IT ALL - "Life On The Ropes" CD/ 32:16.
I don't think I can put into words the amount of respect I have for this band. I don't know how they can still put out albums that sound totally fresh and down with the kids without losing focus or getting jaded or packing it in for bankers jobs. Most people tell me their fave SOIA record is "Scratch The Surface" (you fools, it's clearly "Just Look Around"!!) but I guess if I had to compare this newie to anything from the back catalogue it is most like "Scratch.."" In fact, there isn't a person reading this who doesn't know what SOIA sound like so I think this review is pretty much taken care of. Do I need to mention that John Joseph sings on here? *(SM)*
FAT WRECK.

SILVERSTEIN - "When Broken is Easily Fixed" CD / 38:39.
Oh good god, NO!!! What is this drivel? Victory along with Revelation and Goodlife have gotten to the point where they will sell any old crap just to make a few quid. This band is seriously annoying. Straight in with the heavy bit for thirty seconds, then shift gear into emo rock mode. Bleugh. Totally sappy indie / emo garbage that really with a bit of tweaking would see them taking the radio and MTV by storm. I can't get over the blokes voice on here. I would dearly like to remove his vocal chords. Oh, and what the hell is the point in thanking your legal advisors on the back of the CD? This really does reek of all things evil in HC today. File next to your GET UP KIDS and PROMISE RING CD's, or in the bin like mine. *(FU)*
VICTORY.

SIR KILLALOT - "Painting By Numbers" CD/ 39:48.
First off, who in their right mind would have a photo of the band in the booklet with a Manchester United shirt on the wall behind them? Points deducted before a note is heard I'm afraid. Really gruff, impassioned vocals bringing to mind a mix of Frankie Stubbs and the guy from The BELTONES and the music ain't exactly lightweight either! One song hits you with a street-punk on speed style, next song will be a hardcore thrasher with a real early SSD vibe (especially coupled with the razor-burn vocals) and the variation in styles, whilst remaining true to one sound, is pretty amazing for this three-piece outfit. This has a real early 80s US hardcore sound and feel and the one band is does remind me of time after time is TOXIC REASONS circa *"Independence"*, I think that's possibly down to the vocals, they really are the stand out point on this CD. I like it, it took a fair few plays to get into and I was struggling to appreciate it at first, but this is a cracking album. There are some live songs tagged on the end, covers of *"In my eyes"*, *"Now I wanna sniff some glue"* and *"Rise above"* - extremely well done, true to the originals but adding their own sound too. I'd love to see these guys live, punk fucking rock. *(DS)*
REJECTED, PO Box 6591, Dun Loaghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

SKARNSPAGE - Self Titled CD/ 23:14.
You know how sometimes you are just presented with something that you simply do not know what to do with? Well, this is one of those such things. Nineteen insane and spazzed out freak-tunes that can only be described as a sort of low-fi, jazzed up MELVINS meets MR BUNGLE when they were supposed to be dating HISSANOL type of affair but with a slight world music tinge and Celtic glaze and recorded by two guys in a basement apparently. Interesting to the maximum...this will need about seventeen more listens to truly understand but right now all I know is that I am excited by this odd offering and think you should be too! *(DM)*
LILAC SKY, www.lilacsky.com

SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS - "A Dog Day Afternoon" CD/ 54:49.
The COCKSPARRER and ANGELIC UPSTARTS live CD's in this series have been great, really enjoyable and showcasing old bands that can still kick out the jams alongside the young pups. I was hoping this album would carry on that tradition, but then again I was never a big fan of SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS, sure they had a few good songs, but they had way too many pub rock swaggering numbers that didn't stand the test of time. And that's the problem with this album, it just sounds dated and tired for the most part, songs like "Situations" and "Saturday night 'til Sunday morning" are pretty cool, but most of the time this sounds like old men going through the motions. Oh wait, that's what it is! If you're a big DOGS fan then you may get something from this, but what with the bad sound and embarrassing between song banter, I think it's safe to say this won't be gracing my CD deck anytime soon, or ever again. I always thought I was missing something with this band as I was never a fan, thought maybe this might show me that something I wasn't getting, it didn't. It was worth a few listens though. *(DS)*
TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303 Richmond, VA. 23221, USA.

SMACKDOWN - "S/T" 7".
Some times labels heads go so far up their arses and bring out releases, which make me think why oh fucking why? Sure it's full of blast beats and crazy noise. The only good thing about this is the talking and noise between the songs. Pro wrestling bull shit, maybe I'm narrow minded - I don't fucking care. I just get fed up with the wank shit passing for hardcore these days. Boring, generic (bad) and I just don't get it anymore. I used to really respect this label and would have creamed over anything they put out. Maybe I should start listening to Take That again? *(MH)*
COALITION, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, The Netherlands.

SMALL BROWN BIKE - "Nail Yourself To The Ground" CD/ 22:20.
The last thing I heard by this band was the pretty smart "Dead Reckoning" CD. I thought that was pretty rockin', but this? What happened to them? They went bogus emo! I'd been hearing a few rumours about them, I don't pay any mind to that shit, but they've definitely changed a helluva lot over a couple of years and it doesn't feel like a natural progression at all. This is second rate, "nice" pretty boy emo guff, it's not unpleasant by any stretch of the imagination, but hardly original or groundbreaking. It just sounds like so many other bands, including SUNFACTOR at times, but that's mainly down to the vocals, I think SUNFACTOR have a lot more tricks up their collective sleeves to be honest. "So I fall" has a bit of a CHAMBERLAIN Southern country rock feel, and that's my favourite track on here by a monkey's tree swinging mile. I found this EP very predictable and uninspiring, that's a shame because a couple of years back they were destined to be something very special indeed. Shame. I think they just split up too... no loss on this form. *(DS)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL. 32604, USA.

SMIFELA - "Alchimia" 7".
This is my last thing to review, I'm sad as I've had lots of great stuff to review for this issue and with this 7" I'm really going out on a high. These folks are from France and play totally explosive Boston styled hardcore. Fast as fuck music, high pitched vocals, heavy-duty bass breakdowns and frantic guitar riffs. Just think of LIMPWRIST, KNIFED, RIPCORD, JERRY KIDS, SIEGE, DYS need I go on and on. It's on red vinyl and surely makes my blood run red, especially doing circle pits in our bed room with my little girl laughing at me thinking I'm totally nuts - I'm sure she's not too far wrong. Total killer of a 7". *(MH)*
ALCHIMLA, 43 Rue Franklin 69002, Lyon, France.

SNOT ROCKETS, THE - "Bankrupt" CD/ 33:00.
This is amazing. It's like, sort of old-school sounding pop-punk, but with a contemporary twist that has tonnes of great hooks and harmonies, plus a social conscious. The music is there and so is the message, you can dance to it and you can protest to it which is always a good sign, like DESCENDENTS meets BAD RELIGION meets UK SUBS meets SCREECHING WEASEL. An odd mix that makes a unique and enjoyable band. Fuckin'-A! *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

SNOWDOGS - "Deep Cuts, Fast Remedies" CD/ 44:10.
On Thursday night I went to Asda. It was better than this wank which ironically sounds like THURSDAY. Wank. *(Subbo on behalf of RR)*
VICTORY,

SOLEA / CRASH - Split 7".
Goddamn I love it when two amazing bands share one piece of plastic. SOLEA as you should already know are members of SAMIAM and Garrett from TEXAS IS THE REASON and they just like the hot melding of those two artistes. It's Sergie's guitars and Garrett's vocals and never a better pairing will you get for emotional and melodic rock music, that eases from the speakers like a long-lost best friend. The acoustic version of "Shotgun Wounds" featured here is stripped down to the basics and sounds like a perfect slice of guitar and vocals. CRASH also play the melodic rock thing, but offer a few more pop hooks than SOLEA and gloss it off with fine production, infectious choruses and riffs that stick in your head hours after the needle has left the groove. This right here is what is commonly referred to a great fucking split single. *(RR)*
SOUND FICTION, Strandgaten 201, 5004 Bergen, Norway.

SOLGER - "Codex 1980" CD/ 27:28.
As some one who rabidly seeks out old US Hardcore bands I was taken by surprise on receiving this. I have never come across this band or even heard of them. This here short CD is their "discography" of sorts. You see you get the same songs several times, mainly as the band weren't around for long at all. They called it quits in 1980, way before most the fledgling and now "classic" HC bands had even started out. This is pretty raw stuff as you`d imagine. Stripped down to the basics punk, sped up by a bunch of odd-looking kids. The liner notes are by Mark Arm and Steve Turner from MUDHONEY. Both of who are ranting about how good this record is. The only record the band ever put out on 7" is here in all it's glory, and truly has one of the worst sounds you are likely to hear. Totally horrendous, but appealing to people who are obsessed with the early origins of US Punk / Hardcore scene. I got into this and although it's not up there with bands like the LEWD who were knocking about at the time. It has the energy levels to keep things interesting. Another obscurity for the nerds to start tracking down. *(FU)*
EMPTY, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98102, USA

SOLID - "Total Rush" CD/ 20:16.
Uneventlful Euro-core band that admit on their own inlay card (which contains a biography, how odd) that they followed the metallic HC bandwagon to the point of implosion and are now back like it was '94 all over again. Whatever. Anyway, that aside, this CD contains some pretty pedestrian and directionless hardcore with the occasional innovative fretwork but nothing that 15 year old kids in THE PROMISE t-shirts aren't doing in a garage a few miles away. File under 'irrelevent' next to RYKERS and DISCIPLINE. *(SM)*
RPP, PO Box 48, BXL 19, 1190 Brussels, Belgium.

SOLUTION, THE - "I Don't Like You" CD.
Oh dear third rate Jap. street punk. You know how the yanks took Oi! Music and pretty much turned it into a joke, well this lot obviously liked it and followed suit making some fucking dodgy pub rock. They go for the old classic `Cum on Feel the Noize` by SLADE which sounds about as hard as the OASIS version. As far as I'm concerned aggro merchants and criminals with music to suit should play Oi / Street punk. This lot are certainly not that. Grim stuff. Made my feet itch. *(FU)*
MCR.

SON, AMBULANCE / BRIGHT EYES - "Oh Holy Fools" CD/ 40:32.
On split albums I can see why people would want to try something new, but I just can't handle an album with a SON, AMBULANCE song followed by a BRIGHT EYES song, followed by a SON song and then a BRIGHT EYES song and so on. If you don't like one of the bands there's no way you'll ever listen to it. So as a BRIGHT EYES fan I put off listening to this as long as I had to, and then it turned out I preferred SON, AMBULANCE anyway. I'm only a part time BRIGHT EYES fan and Conor Oberst doesn't half whine on sometimes. And SON, AMBULANCE, though from the same stable, seem mellower and generally more upbeat (not hard). Still, for the reasons outlined above I won't be able to listen to this as much as I'd like to. *(HE)*
SADDLE CREEK.

SOVIETTES, THE - "LP" CD/ 30:58
I gave the SOVIETTES EP a solid endorsement an issue or so back, and here's their debut long-player. And it's FAB. Cram packed in to a disc that barely grazes 30minutes are 14songs that are on a soar away course from the word GO, and belting opener "Blue Stars", gives us lift off… punchy, joyous Punky tuneage, and the multi-vocalising from these 3 gals and one guy adds to revelry. And they maybe from land locked Minneapolis, but there's a bright sunny California breeze to the harmonies. It's not hard to understand why the folk at ADELINE picked up on them. And whilst a majority of the lyrics concentrate on personal trials and tribulations, I couldn't help noticing the venom in those to "Clueless"… *"Hey you, you don't know me, so don't pretend you do. I hear the shit you say loud. Your Red White and Blue yeah! You don't have a clue do you? Do you? Do you know why they hate us? Could it be because of you? You and your Daddy can fuck your Red White and Blue, yeah! You don't have a clue do you? You don't have a clue do you? You don't have a clue do you?"* So that's the chance of Radio Play in Texas out the window then. Do yourself a favour Punk Pickers and get a hold of THE SOVIETTES - they're rather good! *(PC)*
ADELINE.

SPENGLER - "We Need A Miracle" CD/ 44:09.
Recalling the mid-nineties quirky American indie sounds of ARCHERS OF LOAF, SMALL 23 and PAVEMENT, SPENGLER play forlorn, emotive tunes that 'describe a lacking of tranquil natural surroundings, in an often grating inner-city environment' - something I think we can all relate to (apart from those that live in the countryside, obviously). Sure, there's nothing on here that the bands mentioned previously haven't already done better ten years ago, but that said, there's a familiarity in SPENGLER's sound that's comforting and warm and considering how much I used to dig this style all those years ago, it's also a nice little nostalgia trip. *(JP)*
BLUE SKIES TURN BLACK, 214 Thornhill, D.D.O. Quebec, HPG 1P7, Canada

SPITALFIELD - "Remember Right Now" CD/ 36:54.
Holy crap! This band sound exactly like that other band! No, not that one, that other one. Yeah, that other bunch of hair-styled fucking frat boys. I love the way I said "fuck off" - how about you? *(MD)*
VICTORY.

STANDARD UNION - "Bruised Egos And Blood" CD/ 27:29.
Raucous and snotty punk rock with a good upbeat vibe. Their cover of RANCID's "The Ballad of Jimmy and Johnny" fits in perfectly and if you're into that street punk / old school 80's punk style, then this will suffice. Pissed at the world and with a pro-working class, anti-the man stance, yep this is from planet punk rock alright. *(DS)*
LABEL?

STAR STRANGLED BASTARDS - "Whose War Is It?" CD/ 26:15
DISCHARGE have got so much to answer for haven't they? Long after the event and unable to find my programme this evening I think I actually saw SSB (from the USA) at HITS this year. No doubt someone will correct me if they never played at all! Anyway this is good but they must love DISCHARGE. Its not quite a complete copy but damn near! However! The afore mentioned band are far enough in the past to allow SSB to just about get away with it! *(GS)*
BAD DOG, PO Box 61 06 41 - 10937 Berlin, Germany.

STEVE VON TILL - "If I Should Fall To The Field" CD/ 46:14.
Hey rock n'roll party all night boy, you looking for a good time? You've seriously come to the wrong damn place. This is the first solo album by NEUROSIS frontman Steve Von Till and as you might well expect, it's dark as fuck. It's not heavy in the same crushing was as his day band, this is the equally weighty sound of Steve at night – alone and afraid, with nothing but his acoustic guitar and reeling mind for company. He sounds like TOM WAITS, JOHNNY CASH and MARK LANEGAN wrapped into one, playing dark, morose, traditional blues that is so stark and raw you can practically feel him in the room with you breathing down your neck. One for manic depressives only. *(JP)*
NEUROT, PO Box 410209, San Francisco, CA 94141, USA

S.T.F.U. - "Miserable Existence" 7".
Woah. This is a nice surprise. This is like listening to STRYCHNINE on 45rpm. Pretty unrelenting stuff and a whole heap of anger to keep up the assault. Lyrics deal with the usual subjects. Being pissed off with society, etc. Nothing ground breaking but still above average. Worth checking out if you have some spare change. *(FU)*
THIRD WORLD.

STRIKNIEN DC - "Playing With Fire" 2 x CD/ 70:14 & 71:16.
Huge CD package from Rejected covering the past releases of theses Irish punks. Even though I have some of their stuff, which I think I can remember saying in the past was excellent, for some reason I feel they should have had more impact on me. May be it was the reggae bits! Still, despite the fact I though they'd called it a day I find that they are still about and playing and recording. If you like some hard edge political punk with some reggae breaks to give you a rest from the onslaught then check them out. I doubt you'll be disappointed. A final word for the package as well. Not only do you get two discs and all lyrics supplied but also you get a third CD called "Welcome To The Gash factory". It's the band in action live and is another seventy one minutes of music! *(GS)*
REJECTED, PO Box 6591, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, Ireland.

STRUGGLING TIME - "Promo" CD/ 24.07.
I totally love their logo. Well I'm sure we all know Fracture's policy towards promo CD's, so looking at this - a CD-R and copied cover I don't know if it's a demo or just a copy of a proper release. That said, the 5 tracks on this a fucking excellent. It's metal (be it metal core, death, thrash) in it's purest form. Slow breakdowns lead on to more faster and madder sounds. I could imagine people up head banging and moshing to this no problem. Really excellent quality and filled with enough hooks, tempo changes and appeal to keep you interested and never bored. It's no surprise that they are from the country of metalcore. *(MH)*
Stephane Di Berardino, 25 Rue Du Cimetiere, 6120 Nalinnes, Belgium.

STRUNG OUT - "Live In A Dive" CD/ 68:13.
This kicks ass! I love early STRUNG OUT, in fact I loved 'em up until the last record which I just didn't get at all. But this 21 track recording blends old and new together seamlessly to great effect. Fast, technical hardcore with metal rock guitars, a killer vocalist and the ability to write complex-yet-melodic songs that make you wanna move. They seem to be having a great time and their enthusiasm shines through on their playing and execution. Fuck they're tight, stops and starts, crazy leads and soaring choruses… the kids singing along, crank this up and just wish you were there. Isn't that the whole point of live albums? They dig out some real oldies such as "Support your troops" which was on their debut 7" I believe and a cover of Ozzy's "Bark at the moon" which is pretty cool. My only gripe is no "Solitaire" as that's my personal fave, but there are enough classics to appease all fans (including another fave "Bring out your dead".) The guitars are outrageous, but that's always been part and parcel of their charm and this is one to crank up and enjoy at home with a few beers before hitting the bars methinks. I keep going back to this one, what a great band and what a superb live album. *(DS)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, USA.

STRUNG UP - Self Titled 7".
A few people had mentioned this lot to me in a good light so I was chuffed to get this from Fracture HQ. Strung up play some raging early US style Hardcore. Really angry stuff here, the song `Id rather be smashing Christianity` is a peach and the lyrics to `Death by Cop` and `Strung Up` are pretty intense. I can see people going nuts over the total attempt to sound really old and doing a great job. Raw as hell. Smacks of SSD in there as well. This really is a top-notch record. The artwork is great and it looks good. There's even a free sticker which is suitably depressing. If you see it about, get this. *(FU)*
KANGAROO.

SUGARBOMBS - "Tear Their World Down, Build Up Your Own" CD/ 38:52
The title suggests American Government Foreign Policy, and the musical content certainly does highlight the Global carpet-bombing of Big Hitting American Bands, as this German outfit stand in the debris of BAD RELIGION, RANCID and NOFX inspired Punk Rock. Already some of you have lost interest, the credibility factor is weakening… but SUGARBOMBS have for the most part solid songs, executed with vigour, and the lyrics aren't too shabby at all. S'okay. *(PC)*
ROCKSTAR.

SUN OF NOTHING - "…And Voices , Words, Faces, Complete The Dream" CD/ 59:19.
Easy listening, this is not. SUN OF NOTHING specialize in feedback drenched sludge metal splattered in high pitched screams and belches. Fuck! These vocals are unbelievable. The singer sounds like bats being tortured. The production, unfortunately, is appalling so much of the band's potential power is lost amongst a barrage of tinny guitars and tin pot drums. However, parts of this weird production definately add to the bands bizarre death metal schlock. What a fucking headache. *(JP)*
BLAST BEAT, PO Box 67617, 15103, Pefki Hellas, Greece.

SUPERSUCKERS - Motherfuckers Be Tripping" CD/ 33:57
Okay… all you bullshit mainstream hyped outta nothing, corporate Rock'n'Roll Zeros best stand aside… THE SUPERSUCKERS, for their sins (and ours) are still around to whoop your tight skinny butts all the way back to the retro stores you were contrived in. Their gum chewing, beer swilling dynamics are a hellava lot better than yours. You gotta dig 'em… *(PC)*
ABSTACT SOUNDS LTD, 2 Elgin Avenue, London, W9 3QP, UK.

SWELLBELLYS - "Taking Care Of Business" CD/ 31:07.
Fast and tight UK punk rock hardcore, political, pissed off and in your face. Could have done with a few tunes to make it more memorable, as this just went by without any great hooks or melodies to make anything stand out. Angry men playing angry music, left me cold but it's powerful stuff all the same. *(DS)*
TOWN CLOCK, 39 Station Road, Thirsk, Y07 1QH, UK.

TABULA RASA - "The Role Of Smith" CD/ 37:55.
I really like this, the first riff that hits you is a dead ringer for "The rocker" by The COCKNEY REJECTS, but that's where all similarities end! This could be construed as emo, not a term I like to band around, but this has those trademark vocals (First album GUK) strained and impassioned, but still somehow maintaining melody. In fact, the sound this band has is similar to a lot of "trendy emo" bands around, but the thing that makes them stand out, is the frenetic pace, the almost straight rock riffs and the habit they have for hitting you with a killer hook. At times I'm hearing our very own COPPERPOT JOURNALS, mainly because of the song layouts and aforementioned hooks and melodies. But they aren't afraid to slow things down, rock out at a slower pace and broaden their sound. Anyone remember the TRANS MAGETTI from a few years ago? Well, if so, you'll have some idea as to the sound this band has. Fans of BRAID should take note also. Yeah, this is something special and well worth checking out if any of the above made sense to you. *(DS)*
A-F RECORDS, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA.

TAKE, THE - "Gene Pool + 2" CD/ 11:30.
Cool little "single" from one of the best bands to emerge from Wales in recent years. *"Gene Pool"* is a classic "indie punk" song, in fact it reminds me of ASH... which is NOT a bad thing at all in my book. You have to wonder if they got a video played on cable TV what might happen. Strong song writing, an imaginative structure and a dynamic song that holds your attention from start to finish. The other two songs showcase the bands diversity in styles. *"Stress relief"* harkens back to their earlier sound, which definitely had a little NIRVANA influence creeping through. Pick this up and if you like, well there's a full album of similar such class on Household Name called *"Propeller"*. Quite simply, a cracking good band with solid songs who are well worth your time and attention. *(DS)*
GOOD CLEAN FUN.

TEN GRAND - "This Is The Way to Rule" CD/ 32:16.
A fantastic snarling beast of a record. Like HOOVER grabbing AT THE DRIVE IN by their trendy afros and butt fucking them until they can take no more. Veering between piledriving brutality and quiet, skeletal intensity, all the while maintaining a seasick, sheen of dissonance. This record is tense, taut and, to the casual observer, difficult but, as with the work of their spiritual precursors; SHELLAC, GIRLS AGAINST BOYS and FUGAZI, the rewards for perseverance are great indeed. *(TW)*
SOUTHERN, PO Box 577375, Chicago Il, 60657, USA.

TERMINUS - "Graveyard of Dreams" CD/ 59:29.
This is fantastic. I've never heard TERMINUS before, but have heard a lot about them and have wanted to give them a listen for some time. This is a compilation of their songs from over the years, and although there's no real explanation inside of what this is all about, I'm assuming it's like a Best of CD because it's all so fucking good. In fact, if it isn't and there are better songs still then that'd be some feat because the quality on here is top-notch! The best way I can describe them is, like NICK CAVE singing BAD RELIGION songs if that makes any sense? If it doesn't you'll just have to check it out for yourself, which is something I strongly recommend that you do anyway because this is a welcome member of any record collection! Sweet! *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

TERROR - "Lowest Of The Low" CD/ 16:34.
Phew! This is just incredible, I have to force myself to stop listening to this CD. TERROR blast forth with a metallic hardcore rage, with fast riffage and guttural pitbull styled vocals. A mixture of INTEGRITY and KILLING TIME / RAW DEAL terrorising all that listen. Though it's definitely more so with the former. Fucking great recording, I was walking around listening to this on my personal stereo and had to watch myself so I wouldn't't jump around, those all around me would have thought I was nuts! Lyrically, what a mess, you wonder what someone went through to have such contempt for those around him. The guy has obviously been shat on a few times. I definitely recommend this to those who love hardcore, with just the right amount of metal. *(MH)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

THERE WERE WIRES - Self Titled CD/ 30:12.
Screamo, crash, bang, wail, scream, shout, cry, emo, pain, widely bit, loud bit, quiet bit, loud bit again. You know the rest. *(JP)*
IODENE.

THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY - "The Cleveland Finger" CDEP/ 11:44.
I don't know why, but I really like this band name. It just sticks in the head. So, with a great name, and a hilarious cartoon adorning the CD's inlay that will be going up on my wall, the big question is, how is the actual music? From the moment the awesomely dirty bass starts this thing off it's an all out intense assault of fantastic punk-jazz-hardcore-shouty-rock that reminds me of a sort of FUGAZI vibe but with something of its own that keeps it fresh and original instead of merely aping. A good, if not short release. It'll be nice to hear a full length soon. *(DM)*
EXIT STENCIL, PO Box 110775, Cleveland, OH, 44111, USA.

THREATS, THE - "Twelve Punk Moves" CD/ 37:36.
Another band from the glory days of UK '82 punk rock, back on the trail after years in the wilderness. The THREATS were a band I always thought were criminally under-rated / overlooked / ignored... their "Politicians and Ministers" 12" EP from, fuck, must be 20 years ago now, was a classic, in fact I still have it in my collection. This is pretty much all-new material, well recorded and full of punk rock anger, mid-fast paced stuff, it's good wholesome punk rock without a doubt... just check out the label this is on. The music is really strong, I wish there were a few more hooks and killer choruses, it's just a little lacking on that front for me, but the tempo is upbeat and the vocals are good. Not as great as I was hoping for, it has to be said, but neither a disappointment. *(DS)*
DR. STRANGE, PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 90701, USA.

THIS AIN'T VEGAS - "The Black Lung Captain" CD/ 31:34.
This review seems almost redundant and surplus to requirements since you would have to been headless to have missed the impact that THIS AIN'T VEGAS have made on the British scene over the past year or so. And that's strong testament to not only the incredible music they play but also the sincerity of the people involved. "The Black Lung Captain" possesses the gold dust of an independently produced record: a genuine passion that shines through the music. It's a record that wants to be played and captures a band exploding with ideas and energy. Sure the serrated guitars and barbed dual vocals give a few nods towards seminal DC luminaries but it's been channelled into a sound that's far more homegrown, and distinctly British. And with those innately British facets comes a musical lineage all the way back to the angular rock of GANG OF FOUR and XTC and the aggressive pop of THE JAM and early BUZZCOCKS. In short this is music that sounds like it's delivering new sounds; purely because of contagious enthuisasm it pours from the speakers. Whether THIS AIN'T VEGAS can hold onto the reins remains to be seen, but for now "The Black Lung Captain" captures a band in a state of near trancendence. *(RR)*
JEALOUS, PO Box 321, Leeds, LS6 3YT, UK.

THREE MINUTE MOVIE - "The Film Reflects a Dramatic City" CD/ 37:18.
This came as a sweet surprise as I was under the impression that 3MM had split up after Misashi left last year, but there's a replacement in his shoes and that means we're blessed with another fantastic 3MM album. These guys play a mesmerising blend of emo rock and just straight up great melodic rock music that delivers a whole load of intelligent melodies wrapped up in sharp guitars and tight rhythms, destined to have your head rocking within minutes. There's still elements of BRAID in here but only in the odd stacatto guitar riffs, the rest of the sound is more likely bring to mind POP UNKNOWN's rockier moments or even the GET UP KIDS when they used to be good and played straight-up melodic rock (as opposed to the overblown pomposity of their latter days). Note should also be made that the intrumental "Kiss the Worms Good Night" is the sort of rock ELLIOTT wish they could still write (or maybe just I do). No surprises here then; another great Snuffy Smile release and another great 3MM album. *(RR)*
SNUFFY SMILE, 4-1-16 Daita, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, Japan.

TOMAHAWK - "Mit Gas" CD/ 40:41
I saw FAITH NO MORE on their "The Real Thing" tour back in fuck knows when and during one song the sound engineer keeled over, hit the desk and the dials spun like a skinny pole-dancer. The sound went incredibly fucking loud and shit went to hell. This sounds like that seminal moment of my youth. *(RR)*
IPEACAC.

TRANSPLANTS, THE - Self Titled CD/ 45:20.
This band comprises of members of a couple of pretty low-key, but heavily politically active, underground DIY punk bands. They had interviews in Maximum Rock'n'Roll recently where they talked a lot about fighting the police in Seattle and "bicycle liberation", but man I bet Mike Thorn would be seriously fucking pissed if he knew that their side-project, THE TRANSPLANTS, was doing as well as it is in the commercial music world! *"How well do you mean?"*, I bet you're thinking, right? Well put it this way, the last time I heard a TRANSPLANTS song was on a Clairol hair products advert last night on TV, in between the first and second halves of legendary British soap opera Coronation Street. Yeah... fucked up shit, yo, holmes? Am I quick off the mark or just a crack smokin' pimp mobile? What's the word on the street, brother? Anyway... if you're looking for some raging political crusty punk, it's best you just walk on by with head bowed low, for THE TRANSPLANTS play music akin to the BEASTIE BOYS being raped by a drum'n'bass DJ (with cap on backwards of course), with a heavy display of piano's and some geezer with a speech impediment doing a comedy Tim Armstrong impression over the top of it all. A dirty record brimming with filthy wrongness that silly radio presenters seem to "big up" by the dozen. Whatever, beeatch. *(MD)*
EPITAPH.

TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT - "Devil's Egg EP" CD/ 14:12.
Short, but explosive, the four tracks featured here show us exactly what Sweden's TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT do best. Harsh and heavy, but injected with a liberal dose of DRIVE LIKE JEHU off-kilter melody, this new EP finds the band sounding energised, excited and inspired. Turn it up loud and it will rip your ears off. Play it quiet and the melodies come seeping through and hook us in like the wet flapping punk rock fish we are. Great stuff. *(JP)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604-4636, USA.

TREND - Self Titled CD/ 37:48
Bass heavy, guitar slashing German outfit, songs sung in their native tongue, with full blooded gritty vocals that aren't just all spit 'n growl but persuasive in their angry clarity. A CD that grew on me as it progressed, plenty of tempo changes, melodic breaks and a sound, while not totally of its own, not either on the bandwagon of anything current and hip. For some assistance with their direction, they reminded me a bit of SCHWARTZENEGGAR. And like I said, all sung in German, but I never was so close-minded to be put off music just because it's sung in a foreign language I can barely understand. *(PC)*
PLASTIC BOMB.

TRINITY TEST - "Waiting for the Rebirth" CD/ 13:09.
Ok so this lot have been listening quite religiously to DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN by what I can gather. They actually manage to pull it off quite well, which is a surprise but you have to wonder what the point is. There's countless bands out there playing this tech-grind-metal at the moment and this lot are more than likely going to be lost in amongst the hundreds of others looking to get on Relapse. The lyrics are pretty grim. I don't think this lot place much value on human life and all four songs are about death and mutilation to some degree or other. *(FU)*
TRINITY TEST,

TRUE NORTH - "Put Your Nightlife Where Your Mouth Is" 12".
Wow, a 12" - remember them? I think my sister has some, I know she has Alice Cooper doing the theme tune to "Friday The 13th, Part 6", or something, on 12". Hah, anyway... this is a very special disk, the centre label is actually a full colour 7" circle, with clear vinyl, so it's like a really confusing picture disk - but looks totally amazing. Anyway, after a silly spoken word intro by some guy from Gainesville's premier mental hosptial, the 'NORTH crank it up to 11, shout "fuck you" in a way only they know how, and show you what the fuck off-kilter Gainesville hardcore "emo" is all about. I'd say this band is mid-way between TWELVE HOUR TURN and a slower PALATKA - yep, that good... I bet this is limited, so pick it up already. *(MD)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

TSOL - "Divded We Stand" CD/ 35:46.
Hey, I think this is even better than their last album (their first release after the "big reformation"...) "Sedatives" kicks things off in great Jack Grisham style, and has as much early JOYKILLER in it as the familiar sound you have come to expect from TSOL. This also has a great DVD with it, including an hilarious interview with Jack (it's gotta be a joke, hah)... For fans of the first OFFSPRING album and people with an appetite for good, straight up, punk fucking rock. Short review, but it's all about the fucking word-count, baby - times are tough, don't you know? *(MD)*
NITRO.

TUMMLER - "Early Man" CD/ 47:06.
The first thing to hit you about Tummler is how huge they sound. From the moment you hit play, gigantic drums and colossal guitars come galloping out of your speakers like runaway horses coming to stampede your head. It's rock. It's a sonic cathedral of sound. It's KYUSS fighting over the last hit on the bong with MONSTER MAGNET, or FU MANCHU challenging Ozzy era-SABBATH to a drunken dune-buggy race. There's some awesome guitar work on here – chunky riffs and odd little harmonics and melodies that are reminiscent of QUEENS OF THE STONEAGE. Don't fight it, no one will be able to resist the urge not to bang their heads to this. *(JP)*
SMALL STONE RECORDS, PO Box 02007 Detroit, MI 48202 USA.

TURBO A.C'S, THE - "Automatic" CD/ 32:53.
I've seen this NYC trio on a couple of occasions, once at a biggish festival, and the other in a sparsely populated club, and on neither occasion did they even get close to lighting my fire. Actually,

worse than that, they bored the pants off me. What's not doing it for me? I think it's gotta be because they sound like a wannabee Greaser Rock'n'Roll version of THE OFFSPRING. The constant "woah, woah" backing vocals bugged the shit outta me. This is not a clever formula kids, and one I would most strongly advise you do not try at home. Even the inclusion of Dark Surf Guitars cannot rouse me from my slumber, and a general air of apathy towards this CD. Last time I saw them, they were giving their PR lady shit for not getting them any press, interviews, etc... Can't imagine why?? *(PC)*
BITZCORE.

TURTLEHEAD - "Bleeding Hearts And Burnouts" CD/ 35:12.
I have to be honest here and say that I think this band has one of the worst names ever! Just puts me off from the start and I'm sure I'm not the only one. It just conjures up pre-conceptions of either a dumb punk band or some student type comedy band. The thing is, this band are pretty damn good, they play hard-edged melodic punk rock with a lot of style and intelligence. This album is full of hook-filled songs with strong vocals, stylish guitar parts and tunes that are well thought out. The title track is a great song and to be honest, there isn't really a weak song on this album, it's a solid release from a hard-working band. Good live act too and top guys, this is a bit of a korker this one I tell ya and along with SHATTERHAND and BAREFOOT go to prove that some of the finest UK bands are north of the border. Fond memories of them crashing over at my old London flat along with TOKYO ADVENTURES and DIGGER... about 12 people crashed out all over the place, like a human carpet. Coughing, snoring, and farting... the cat freaked. *(DS)*
LABEL?

TWO MINUTES HATE - "Strong And On" CD/ 28:34.
Another discography from Thorp, this time from a band that used to feature Andy Thorp on vocals. Always underestimated, and never really given any breaks, the band split up but would no doubt be absolutely hot shit in the eyes of the new flock of Bridge 9 loving dorks if they were still around. This is totally stripped down, raw sounding old school hardcore. Influenced by BLACK FLAG and early Boston and NYHC. The underproduction actually suits the tracks. If they were polished and over-produced you'd lose the feeling of sweat and toil and energy. I also like the perspective of the lyrics, a lot of them taking a more positive motivational roll than you're average band of this ilk, maybe because Andy was a counsellor for juvenile delinquents at the time. My band DENY EVERYTHING is hitting the studio tomorrow and if we drop anything that sounds half as good as this then I'll be stoked. Another sweet release from this label that is quickly establish itself as a force to be reckoned with. Fracture always kept me in good supply of goodies from Thorp, but since this is the last issue, I'm wondering if I can set up a subscription to get all their releases sent out direct! (*SM)*
THORP, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, USA.

ULCERRHOEA - "Line and Row" CD/ 44:03.
This bunch of Swede's are on a mission to make noise. There's no doubt about that. I didn't realise they'd been as prolific as they have. The world of split tapes and 7`s is where this lot have been residing. This twenty-three song LP comes with a whopping twenty-nine bonus tracks from the elusive split singles. All over and done in less than three quarters of an hour! There's no time for subtlety in ULCERRHOEA's world. No sir, just pounding, fast as hell crusty thrash. With songs like `Ashes to Ashes`, `System Collapsed` and `Concrete World`. You know that these lads are not happy. If you want to hear a band firmly rooted in the history of old bands like ANTI CIMEX but trying to mix it with the likes of DROP DEAD, this will do you right. Not going to blow you away but gets up there on the odd occasion. (*FU)*
RESCUED FROM LIFE.

ULCERRHOEA / SIVIILIMURHA - "Split" 7".
Was looking forward to this, with it's cool hand screened cover, etc. First up is ULCERRHOEA who are a fast band from Germany. Their side is played at 45 rpm and they sound like early NAPALM DEATH with their tommy gun drumming and grunty grindcore. SIVILLIMURHA on the flip, who's side plays at 33 rpm, are from Finland. They've got 14 songs are they are probably the worst band I've heard on 7", I've heard worse on tape - but for fucks sake this is a 7". My own band in the late 80's did fast early NAPALM DEATH style noise and we were a lot better than this, but there's no way I'd put it on a 7". I'd have a hard job just taping it for people. Avoid this 7" at all costs, unless you wanna annoy the neighbours. *(MH)*
$5 / 5 Euros ppd: VITUN APARAT!, PO Box 11 10, D-90538 Eckental, Germany.

ULTIMATE FAKEBOOK - "Open Up and Say Awesome" CD/ 47:32.
This was reviewed a couple of issues back by Hilary, but it's been licensed to a European label, I imagine in time for their European tour of May 2003... whoops! Anyway, we just put 'em on in London, they were OK, just WEEZER influenced indie rock with a few moments of emo-obsurdity. I really don't get this weak frontman stance *"I'm so weedy and geeky (look at my bad eyeglasses), but I have a love so strong and you break my heart"*, whatever dude. But the bassist is a big mean skinhead, actually he's not mean, he's a lovely guy. But I digress, this is alright, some nice little melodies and a couple of strong songs that make the rest seem weak in comparison, when the vocals go all high it just sounds so derivative of aforementioned band that it's almost laughable. Ach, I'm being hard, if you like vacuous pop music and Vagrant is home to your favourite acts then you'll get a kick out of this. I have to say, I think KOUFAX are a better band... ouch, that is really fucking harsh! *(DS)*
FLOPPY COW, PO Box 79, 3054 Schupfen, Switzerland.

UNSEEN, THE - "Explode" CD/ 21:46.
Solid punk rock, pissed off and looking the part with Mohawks, spiky hair and studded leather. Fairly basic stuff here, but it's done well and they keep the tempo up which helps keep your interest. But for me, it's a little too samey from start to finish without any real stand-out songs that rise above the mediocre. I've just heard this kinda stuff so many times over so many years and as much as I enjoy punk rock like this in the live arena, on record it does very little for me. Saying that, I'll probably get in late one night from a whiney emo show and crank this up declaring it *"the real deal"*... actually that's why I own GBH and DISCHARGE records... just to remind me that I am a fucking punk and not a fashion pussy who wears a plastic heart on his sleeve. From the label that brought us SNFU, YOUTH BRIGADE, AGRESSION and 7 SECONDS back in the day... oh how the times they a-change, they wouldn't have touched this with a bargepole back then. *(DS)*
BYO, PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067, USA.

V/A - "Aggropop Now" 2xCD/ 145:37.
Amazing cover art based on Apocalypse Now packages this awesome 2 CD set put out by the guys from TERRORGRUPPE in a celebration of their career, featuring tracks from bands they have played with over the years. There are songs from all around the world, cover versions, rare tracks, new tracks...the list goes on, and the bands featured include some of the best today such as GOOD RIDDANCE, MIGHTY, MIGHTY, BOSSTONES, MAD CADDIES, SHANDON, GUTTERMOUTH, SWINGIN' UTTERS, REAL MCKENZIES, NOFX, BOUNCING SOULS, ME FIRST AND THE GIMMIE GIMMIES, WIZO and of course TERRORGRUPPE themselves, to name just a motley few of the myriad bands featured on this 55 song 2 disc set! You'd be a fool not to check it out! *(DM)*
www.destiny-tourbooking.com

V/A - "Another Round of Golf Vol 5" CD/ 61:48
Dull. *(RR)*
GOLF, PO Box 6, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 9FB, UK.

V/A - "Banana Hits" CD/ 74:01
Seventy-four fuckn minutes of SKA... you gotta be joking me Dave??!! To be fair this is ska in a trad style, and not the mostly crap-awful Pop / Punk hybrid, and I use the Punk connection pretty lightly. This is not the music to lift my spirits... moan, groan. But I have a plan... take this disc to my rotund chum Ian IMMEDIATE at his shop in Sydney Street, Brighton to let him give it his own Skankability Test. Thus allowing me to put something more to my liking on my stereo. What have we learnt here people? The art of Delegation, and Prioritisation. You just gotta know the rules in this go-get-it modern world *(PC)*
BANANA.

V/A - "Black On Black : A Tribute to Black Flag" CD.
I was very, very wary of this CD. Two of my personal dislikes. Compilations AND cover versions together. Compound this with my love of BLACK FLAG I was not looking forward to this. Nine out of ten times these things are pretty tragic, and really bands should pay tribute to these greats by leaving them alone. That said this is a pretty decent little racket, BURNT BY THE SUN doing `Drinking and Driving` is great. Along with COALESCE, CONVERGE, DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN you know it's not going to be very pretty. I was impressed with most of what's on here to be fair. I just can't imagine listening or really wanting to own this. It's good but it's just good filler in the collection if you see what I mean. *(FU)*
INITIAL,

V/A - "Boots On The Streets" CD/ 85:42.
International Oi! and street-punk sampler from this Russian label. To be honest there was fuck all of interest to me on here, it all sounded tired and rehashed, like most contemporary Oi! music. But there's a wealth of bands on here such as NUTS AND BOLTS, WEEKEND WARRIORS, NOBODY'S HEROES, BICKLE'S CAB, TOWER BLOCKS, BEERZONE and tons more (30 tracks in all) including the lovely named ADOLF AND THE PISS ARTISTS! This appealed to me about as much a broken-toothed blow-job from a pimp-thrashed, heroin dependent Kings Cross lady of the night. I got better things to do on a winter's night... freeze to death being one of them. *(DS)*
NEURO EMPIRE (see 7 TEEN review for contact details)

V/A - "Brand New Gay Scene" 10".
And my, how new and gay it is! This thick ten inch slab of black vinyl gathers a party of eight Northern bands (because everyone, even simpletons, know that the best bands come from the North) to blast out rock that's largely unreleased and they do it well. THIS AIN'T VEGAS light the fuse with "Been Party", a prime slice of jerky rock just as you'd expect from them. Then BILGE PUMP make noise with rhythms aplomb before KILL YOURSELF damage things and each other with their pounding riffs and screams. The first side is rounded off by THE WOW and their spasmodic melodies and jazz mayhem. JOHN HOLMES open up the flipside with "Yo Yo" recorded live, and a good capturing of their punching metal it is too. People cheer at the end as they rightly should. EIGHTY SIX then cover JAWBREAKER's "Shirt" and do it with style, just to keep Blake and the boys happy. BUZZKILL rock out with "A Sickness" that for some reason reminds me of a man down on his luck in Vegas, he rambles drunkenly by day but by night, that boy is a king that thinks he's the champ of the tables and sounds it. He's a good looker though. And everything is brought to one smooth-talking close by J*R with a much more low-key drawl than you'll usually hear from these rock-meisters; it's a sleazy bass-driven beast like a night in a good brothel and even pays subtle homage to SPINAL TAP. Comes in a nice booklet sleeve so really, you should have this. *(RR)*
OBSCENE BABY AUCTION (www.obscenebabyauction.tk)

V/A - "Decavity" CD/ 76:33.
A compilation CD of other labels music, which for a change a comp. that really shines and produced by web fanzine Decavity. From start to finish there is not one bad song on this and despite the style of bands, the order of the bands really works and I was kept enthralled the whole way through. There's a feast a spazzed hardcore, metallic hatecore and everything in between. Some of the band on it are: FIG 4.0, ASSERT, NARCOSIS, I DEFY, NO CHOICE, THE DEVILS, STAND, SWORN IN, BOXED IN and stacks more. I'll tell you what, it will certainly give you an idea of some of the great bands happening at this very moment - I know because I got to know a load of new bands that have blown me away just listening to this CD. *(MH)*
www.decavityrecords.moonfruit.com

V/A - "Den Haag Motor Rock: Vol 1" CD/ 78:49.
According to the lavish sleeve notes Den Haag, in the Netherlands, is a place where "cocaine bars, hookers and squats are the only nightlife... you gotta be a speed freak to survive amidst the assholes and degenerated morons that roam the dirty brown streets (10 year olds with loaded guns!)"... I've never been, so can't verify the facts, but it sounds like quite a place huh! This CD is out to illuminate the music scene that exists in the melee, and the verdict is: they gotta few lame Stoner Rock acts, a buncha cool Surf bands (WHITE TRASH MINSTRELS, the NAPOLEANS, RAVING BONKERS, DR REVERB) and some snotty grunts trenching it out on the Punk-line, and yeah - JOHNNY COHEN and THE NEW AGE NAZI'S ("Hitler was a Speed freak") are as memorable as their name, spewing forth in an "Ass Cobra" stylee. LUGER '39's crushing burst is worth sticking around for, but a pretty hard work CD overall to tell the truth. *(PC)*
MOTORWOLF.

V/A - "Drive Thru Records 2003 Sampler" CD/ 31:02.
A massive shit by a bunch of cunts. The fold out catalogue that came with this CD is longer than my street. But that's okay, because now I can hook myself up with 74 different types of NEW FOUND GLORY t-shirt. Well ain't that just nu emo-tastic. *(MD)*
MCA / DRIVE THRU.

V/A - "Drunk Fools vs True Till Death" CD/ 29:39.

The title sounds like a DS13 song and with that title you get a comp. CD with straightedge bands and people who drink bands - duh go figure. The straightedge bands play hardcore and the drinking bands play more traditional punk - how cliché is that? Easily enough I SHOT CYRUS are the best band on this comp with their fast early 80's South American, Italian styled hardcore - ace. As far as I can think, haven't they got something out on 625 or something? Haven't got any mags here to check out ads. MERDA are along the lines of I.S.C. with a decidedly fast hardcore approach and are excellent too. JAZZUS and EVIL IDOLS have that traditional sing a long punk sound and are not as exciting as the first two bands. EVIL IDOLS are the only band who have their songs in English, apart from one I.S.C. song, so I'll be buggered if I know what they are singing. I like the front drawing with the skeletons in a circle pit. The artwork kind of reminds me of the drawings on the backs of the shirts on the first SUICIAL TENDECIES LP. Cool comp. *(MH)*

LAJA CRAPS, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila Velha, Es, 29102-973, Brazil.

V/A - "Elkion Records Sampler 2003" CD-R/ 30:56.

Low cost minimally packaged sampler from this little known label. I'd never heard of any of the bands before, but PALE THROATS have a rocky pop thing going on. FEW AND FAR BETWEEN sound like early SUNFACTOR and the other bands showcased here definitely fall into the Deep Elm roster style, eclectic but somehow connected. Bands are EMPIRE STATE GAMES, THE KILLING SUSPENSE, REMAINDER, HEADS WILL ROLL, THE STRYDER and CHARLEVOIX. All very impressive on this representation and this sampler does it's job, cos I'd like to hear more by these bands. Shame about the lack of packaging, it doesn't do the bands justice and it's pretty poor showing from the label. I guess it's just a giveaway disc to get some interest, but with so many releases these days… you gotta make the effort. *(DS)*

www.elkiorecords.com

V/A "Freeware Volume 3" CD/ 76:47.

Comes with Slam fanzine. Lots of heavy bands on this comp, plus a few emo clones. The ones that got my toes tapping are: BURDEN, DAY OF CONTEMPT, SEVERANCE, SKY PROMISE RAIN and THE EUROPEAN TRANSLATION OF. *(TC)*

SLAM-zine, Postfach 100, A-1151 Wien, Germany.

V/A- "Grand Theft Ippo" CD/ 60:07.

Yes, the name does come from the Playstation games Grand Theft Auto and as a result the packaging for this cool compilation CD is fashioned like a Playstation game complete with oversized DVD-style box and instruction booklet style inlay that is like a little 'zine about all the bands contained on the disc. Musically this is a compilation of Ipswich bands and it demonstrates that the Ippo scene is a rich and varied one indeed. One of the best things to see about it is the large presence of female-fronted bands, which is still sadly such a rarity even in our supposedly open-minded punk-rock utopia with many women still alienated from taking part in bands, and also how the bands all maintain a distinct style of their own, the compilation not to be defined as a collection of merely one sort of music but with a lot of variety amongst it's pickings from the pop-punk of LOVEJUNK to the darkness of OK HOTEL, the '77 style punk of RED FLAG to the dub, almost drum and bass style of SINFONIC. All in all, it's a cracking collection and definitely puts the Ipswich scene over big time! *(DM)*

CORNDOG, www.corndogrecords.com

V/A - "High Energy, High Voltage" CD.

Oh yes. Look what a treat Ken at Sound Pollution has done for us lucky punks. One of the best comps. Going and believe me I don't like comps that much. This has an all-star cast for fans of the more extreme end of punk rock music. Amongst the 50 tracks on here you have standouts like KRIGSHOT, HELLNATION, EXCLAIM, SPAZZ, ASSUCK, FLASH GORDON, SLIGHT SLAPPERS, MEANWHILE, NINE SHOCKS TERROR, Y, GAIA, NEMA, UNCURBED, WHN?, SCALPLOCK… Need I go on? Each band blasts through some of the toughest, crazed and full throttle out of control punk out there. Pretty hard to think of a label that could pull together such a 100% winner of a comp. like this. All these bands have gone on to be fondly and obsessively followed to some degree or other in their own rights. This is a great label representation for SOUND POLLUTION. The mighty SHORT HATE TEMPER had me wondering why more people aren`t paying them a lot more time than some of the other over-rated bands out there. Two stunning tracks. The only downsides to this comp. are the digipack format, which is bad news, and the inclusion of THE DUDOOS who are the only clanger in my book; TOY DOLLS are not my cup of tea. Ken Pollutions obsession finally got the better of him then! Ha ha. *(FU)*

SOUND POLLUTION.

V/A - "Inner City Sumo" CD/ 52:26.

This is a compilation of Merseyside bands that have played at the Masque venue in Liverpool on the Inner City Sumo nights. The diversity of musical styles is broad, in fact I have to say, this is genre-less, with the theme being more along the lines of *"Music I like and that's it!"* which is refreshing, but doesn't necessarily make it that compatible to others ears. It's a pretty eclectic and awkward collection, I have to admit to struggling through this at times, there are a couple of familiar faces like GRAMPUS EIGHT and TOKYO ADVENTURES and their tracks veer towards indie pop rather than pop punk (both bands swing both ways if you like). Other bands that held my attention were FLAMINGO 50, ZOMBINA AND THE SKELETONES and The CODETTES, just good old-fashioned indie pop music. Nowt wrong with that, but a lot of the other bands I struggled to sit through, it's just the variation means a real contrast from track to track and that, for me, is not conducive to listening pleasure. A work of love for independent music and you can't knock that, ever, but I was left pretty cold with the majority of music herein contained. Sorry. *(DS)*

LABEL?

V/A - "Maximaal Onthaal" CD/ 43:11.

A monster of a compilation from The Netherlands that gathers together 25 Punk 'n Hardcore bands to voice their opposition to the Dutch Royal Family, and the concept of Monarchy in general. To rub salt in the wounds, in February 2002 crown prince Willem-Alexander married his Argentinean girlfriend Maxima Zorreguieta, whose father was a high-ranking official of the Argentinean Government that was installed by the military junta after a coup in 1976. If you know your history, then you'll be aware that this Government was behind a process of elimination against all those opposed to their rule, and led to an estimated 30,000 people murdered for their political beliefs. Many of these people were arrested and never seen again - The Disappeared. There's an incredibly informative chunky booklet with this CD with an explanation about the mandate of the compilation, historical facts, heaps of links to Websites with information on the struggle for justice in Argentina, the Dutch Monarchy, and also details of the 2 organisations this compilation is a benefit for - support organisations made up of the relatives of those people whose family members were never seen again. And when you're done with all this, slip in the CD and get your ears busted by some primo-angry sounds, including REACHING FORWARD, MIHOEN, SHIKARI, VITAMIN X, SEEIN' RED, HUMAN ALERT and to close BREZHNEV with the ballistic "The Disappeared"… *"Why are you alive when we are dead? The Disappeared are screaming loud from their unmarked graves, the scream from helicopters as they threw them in to the waves, and the scream of their kids when they were taken away, will be ringing thru the church on your wedding day"*. It's an impressive compilation on all levels. My stand on Royalty is one of abject distain, and in the UK particularly they are a parasitical crowd that's definitely well past their sell by date of usefulness, and steadily falling apart at the seams. But the irony is that it's not Anti-Monarchist Anarchists who are inflicting the real damage on The British Royal Family, but Right-Wing Media Mogul (and staunch Republican) Rupert Murdoch *(PC)*

ROYAL BLOOD.

V/A - "Michiganfest 2002" DVD.

Now this is what those of us with cliches in mind refer to as A Document. And this DVD documents the Michiganfest of 2002 perfectly. Not only is it well shot on multiple cameras, but the sound quality is spot-on and it's edited with style too, finished off with some nice graphic touches. Of course, the massive band line-up should serve as enough of a selling-point on it's own merits anyway: HOT SNAKES, SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY, ISIS, DILLINGER 4, CASKET LOTTERY, !!!, DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE, OWLS, SMALL BROWN BIKE, RYE COALITION, DISMEMBERMENT PLAN, ARAB ON RADAR, TED LEO & THE PHARMACISTS, RADIO 4, PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS and oh, all these other great fucking bands too. Just about every person that's been around our house over the past few months has asked to see this in all it's surround sound digital glory, and they've been regaled with moments like when SWEEP's guitarist falls through the ceiling onto the crowd, or the finale of !!! where every fucking person in the room is grinding their hips up against each other like cheap little sluts, or that singer who gets off stage, plants a wet frenchie on a girl then clambers back up for the next verse. It lasts for over two and a half hours too, so we're within the fine realms of value for money here too. Pick this up direct from Bifocal direct or hassle your local independent retailer for it, because it's worth the hassle. Especially since it will be better than the majority of your shitty DVDs. *(RR)*

BIFOCAL MEDIA, PO Box 50106, Raleigh, NC 27650-0106, USA.

V/A - "No Hold Back... All Attack!!!" 2xCD/ about 140:00.

This is an amazing project. 2 CD's (it's on 2xLP as well) of every style of punk rock and hardcore band from the Twin Cities area, USA. All the bands played benefit shows to get all the money together to put it out and you know what, every fucking city in the world should do this. This is just an incredible collection of bands (including DILLINGER 4, HOLDING ON, MISERY, SONGS OF ZARATHUSTRA and a hell of a lot more not so well known bands) that, I am guessing, is truly representitive of the local scene. It has such a unifed feel to it, and that's something that isn't so common nowadays, and together with the great packaging on both the CD and the vinyl, the whole thing is an astonishngly "complete" piece of work that you really need to pick up. Top marks. *(MD)*

HAVOC.

V/A - "Non-Conformity" CD/ 59:49.

My friend Manjeev is from Malaysia, he rules… he is one of the finest people I have had the pleasure of working alongside (at Southern / Good Looking Records). He was also one of the most hardcore dope smokers I have met, I think he's quit now… hey, see that pig do a loop the loop? He now works at the Rough Trade store in Notting Hill, so say hello if you go in there… he has a beard and looks like he's from Malaysia! Anyway, this comp of hardcore and punk bands is pretty cool, nice to see what the lesser known punk communities are up to and this… wait, I'd best play it first huh? Manjeev is the biggest WEAKERTHANS fan, but I'm prepared to cut off a finger if there's anything remotely similar to them on here… it looks pretty punk, hey, I say *"pretty"* too much don't I? Well some people say *"fuck"* a lot, I say *"pretty"* and *"kinda"* a lot… both terms allow me to state an ambiguous opinion… OK, the CD… let's play it a bit, leave it for awhile, go back, play it again, note what is good and what isn't, get into it as much as I can.. I talk shit… ya know, I NEVER review anything on one listen… I know some reviewers do, but how many times have you heard something, not been that impressed, only to give it a second try a little later and discover it's genius. I'll resume this "review" after a little investigation… I'm playing the WEAKERTHANS latest CD right now myself, so it could be a bit of a contrast… volume up, let's get punk. Actually, I just realised I gave this to Pete Craven a week or so ago… so maybe he'll review the music in the next review! God, I'm a putz. *(DS)*

KNOT c/o Ahmad, No 401, Blok 17, Seksyen 8, 40000 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

V/A - "Polyvinyl Sampler" CD/ 60:10.

One song each for the 13 currently recording bands on the Polyvinyl roster (so no BRAID or AMERICAN FOOTBALL) and also one song from a FRICTION 1991-1994 discography. Polyvinyl leads the way in eclectic indie pop with nicer than nice bands like the foppish AM/FM, the instrumental PELE and the heartfelt THE IVORY COAST. But there are also rich, engagingly different acts such as SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME, MATT POND PA, ALOHA and MATES OF STATE. FRICTION were an awesome pre-CAP'N JAZZ band, and OWEN is Mike Kinsella's more intimate afterthought. Though many of the bands are side projects and innovations of existing bands on Polyvinyl, each has its own flavour, making this sampler a balanced and intimate compilation. *(HE)*

POLYVINYL, PO Box 7140, Champaign, Il 61826-7140, USA.

V/A - "Pounded - The Official Comic Book Soundtrack" CD/ 41:55.

Really cool compilation here with great songs by bands such as BIGWIG, SQUIRTGUN, TEEN IDOLS, RISE AGAINST, STRIKE ANYWHERE, ANN BERETTA, BIG IN JAPAN, MTX and many more. In this day and age, compilations are usually badly edited label showcase pieces, but this one harkens back to the days when comps were cool! Don't know the status of the songs, as in if they've all been released before, but the MTX one is an old song, the superb *"New girlfriend"* and the BOUNCING SOULS *"That song"* was on their last record In the time between writing this review and it being submitted the B.SOULS have a new album out!) I don't actually own any records by any of the other bands, so this makes for a good listen. The comic book art is good, the disc is enhanced and you can find out more about Pounded and its creators, along with a couple of comic strips. Yeah, this is pretty dang cool on every level. *(DS)*

SPRINGMAN, PO Box 2043, Cupertino, CA 95015-2043, USA.

V/A - "Punktured" CD/ 71:22.

A great compilation and a benefit for RAPE CRISIS. Here's the line up and its all yours for three quid including the postage! HOMEBREW, LEFT FOR DEAD, ACTIVE SLAUGHTER, BREZHNEV, BICKLE'S CAB, MAFIA VS NINJA, SIN DIOS, COP CAR PILE UP, SWELLBELLYS, ASBEST,

COMBAT SHOCK, DOG ON A ROPE, EGG RAID, INDICATOR, EASTFIELD, APB, BUG CENTRAL, FUCKHATEPROPAGANDA, DOGSHIT SANDWICH, FLYBOY, ANARCHY SPANKY, DEAD PETS, SCUNNERED, FREAKS UNION, AGROGAZM, ANAL BEARD and the CHINEAPPLE PUNX. This would be a superb vinyl release but alas the punters only want CD's these days. *(GS)*
PUNKTURED, c/o 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK.

V/A - "Raw Deal" CD/ 35:44
A first class reissue of this Raw Records 12 track compilation that originally hit the racks way (way!) back in '77, retailing at the astoundingly cheap £2.49, which even then was great value. Just trust me on that one, okay. And trust me also on the endorsement of these lesser known, but still thoroughly potent outfits from the eye of the needle... including THE USERS, ACME SEWAGE COMPANY, SICK THINGS, GT'S, PSYCHO'S, KILLJOYS (whose Kevin Rowland went on to DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS) and THE BLOOTCLOTS. For a sharp shot of snotty nihilistic energy you can't go far wrong with this CD *(PC)*
DAMAGED GOODS.

V/A - "Shudder To Think Tribute" CD/ 63:48.
If this is how you pay tribute to one of the best bands of the nineties then I'd hate to see how you'd insult them. Frankly, the idea of a bunch of no marks plundering the rich back catalogue of SHUDDER TO THINK chills me to the fucking bone. You see the problem is twofold. Usually with tribute albums you have the thorny problem of your band not being as good as the band you're covering, sometimes sheer novelty value can get you through this. However, with SHUDDER TO THINK you have the added problem of your singer, whose voice, despite his best efforts/vanity can not, will not and will never possess even a third of the natural beauty that STT's Craig Wedren possessed on his worst day. And that, you see, is the problem with THIS "tribute". In all honesty, this isn't a tribute. It's more like fucking slander. Add to that the fact that this collection serves no purpose other than to make Ignition Records money when the project could have been used to raise money for research into Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The disease that Mr Wedren was suffering from, on and off during the recording of STT's last two records, and all you have is product which leaves a very nasty taste in the mouth indeed. *(TW)*
IGNITION, 1 Chanos Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2NY, UK.

V/A - Soul Is Never Discouraged" CD/ 68:40.
Hey, pull up a chair... and listen carefully, I got something I wanna share with ya'll. It's CD's like this that exemplify why it's all gone fucking wrong with Fracture. When record labels like Sweet are sending in their bullshit Indie Rock compilations, full of bands that they CAN'T BELIEVE AREN'T SIGNED (I fucking well know why - they're SHIT) to a magazine that's got Punk Rock principles and foundations, and although everybody who writes for this mag is open minded, and music mad, noone is remotely interested in your bands. I don't know what sort of reaction you were expecting to receive. But fuck you anyways. And I also find it hard to believe that a band called THE CHEESEMAKERS are "kings of the North East scene", or I'd have read about them in CODEYE... right Rob??!! Absolute 100% baggo-shite. *(PC)*
SWEET.

V/A - "Skyboys vs. Highscalers" CD/ 64:59.
Fantastic, just what I always wanted - a lame compilation of Clean Cut American Kids living out their Cali-Pop dreams. I used to think, by tenuous roots, I had a 'connection' with this music, but the longer the joke goes on, every last drop of interest and credibility has been drained out of the pool. I'm sure not all these bands are American, but they might as well be, the whole sound is just so homogenized. Lifeless. The point of this compilation is unclear, as there's no contact info for the bands, no liner notes about the agenda. The title of the final insipid song sums it up nicely "Alternative is Dead"... I think I'm wasting my (wasting my) time here. *(PC)*
BRAND NEW HERO.

V/A - "Strength Thru Oi!" CD/ 50:21.
After a couple of dodgy re-issues, this much-maligned Oi! compilation from 1981 gets the Captain Oi! treatment at last. As a historical document of the UK street punk movement of the time, this is the business with class material from THE STRIKE, LAST RESORT, THE 4-SKINS, COCKSPARRER, INFA RIOT, CRIMINAL CLASS, lunacy from SPLODGE and street poetry from Barney Rubble and Garry Johnson. OK, so some of the material is dated and at times a little cringeworthy, but the good songs on here stand the test of time, especially COCKSPARRER with "Taken for a Ride" and "Running Riot" - two absolute classics. The original sleeve notes by Garry Bushell are re-printed to showcase the anti-racist tone of the project as this record has been wrongly steeped in controversy for the past 22 years. How many Nazi skins does it take to tarnish an entire scene? One, the cover model! He came out shortly after this and I heard he was diagnosed HIV positive. You couldn't make this up could you? Lesson to be learned, never adorn the sleeve of your record with a semi-naked, gay Nazi skin. It could bring about repercussions! No shit Sherlock. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

V/A - "The Best Of Mero" CD/ 65:31.
Basically this CD features all the bands that MERO of REJECTED RECORDS fame has been in! Now I didn't know he'd been in any let alone the following bands, DR SHITFACE, NOISE POLLUTION, CONTROL and KNIFED. So there we have it, if you're a fan of MERO or any of the bands then this CD is for you! *(GS)*
REJECTED, PO Box 6591, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, Ireland.

V/A - "The International Language of Love" CD/ 42:05.
This is cool - an international medley of pop-punk bands. Obviously there's a SCREECHING WEASEL legacy going on here (it will last forever) but this CD features some great garage-y tracks from the UK (ZATOPEKS), Denmark (THE 20 BELOWS), Spain (TWENTYYEARSOLD) and the Netherlands (THE APERS). This is all energetic and cheerful and a great little selection of four tracks each. ZATOPEKS are a pleasure, THE 20 BELOWS are surprisingly chipmunk-ish with short catchy blasts of pop, THE APERS more growlish and TWENTYYEARSOLD have some really top tracks. Definitely a cool little package of world treats. *(HE)*
WHOA OH, 52 McLoughlin Street, Glen Cove, NY 11542, USA.

V/A - "The Shape of Flakes To Come" CD/ 78:53.
This has been out for a while now, but this is one of the best compilations I have come across in the last 6 years of making this 'zine, so it's only right I pass on my good fortune to the world. Anyway, unless you've been living under a rock for the last X number of fucking years, you should be aware of No Idea Records. For some, No Idea is the best record label in the world. I mean, where else will you find a compilation of such out and out quality AND diversity? 33 tracks including bands such as THE 'TONE, AGAINST ME!, RADON, PALATKA, TWELVE HOUR TURN, FIFTH HOUR HERO, GUNMOLL, ANNALISE, UNITAS, CLAIRMEL, THE SWARM, FLOOR, BILLY REESE PETERS and tons more!!! This is no mish-mash of unrelated bollocks though, all the bands on the label seem to fit seamlessly together, even if singularly there's a lot of diversity. Plus, No Idea are one of the only "big" US labels whose owners actually have a fucking clue about UK punk rock (Fat used to have half a clue, but then they dropped GOOBER PATROL, CONSUMED and SNUFF like hot potatoes on a summers day!!!), and have released albums by two of my favourite UK bands THE 'TONE and ANNALISE, as well as a split 7" featuring the monumentally supreme NO CHOICE. I know that Mr. Var (he being half of man and wife team collectively known as "Jen and Var") also has a large interest in early UK anarcho, indeed No Idea even released ("traded for the good of the scene" with Allied Records) the CRASS CD "Christ The Bootleg", selling it for $3.00, and it's great to see his interest in our little Island did not die in 1984! Anyway, a compilation of this calibre would not be complete without that something "extra, extra special" and that "something special" comes in the form of an unreleased PANTHRO UK UNITED 13 track "I'm Not Drunk, I Hate You". I presume this was from the ill-fated split 8" with WARDANCE ORANGE that never happened a few years back (another one of those tracks was on the "Back To Donut" compilation) and holy fuck, if this song ain't just The Bastard Son of a Thousand Maniacs!! (that means it's good, dumbass)... seriously, how unbelievably great was this band? Still probably my favourite No Idea band of all time.. and I am pretty sure there's other unreleased tracks still lying around as well - hopefully the singles / unreleased stuff compilation happens in the next year or so, as that will be a true "Goliath" of a release, without a doubt. Fuck man, it's impossible to say a bad word about that band... or this label. This compilation is free from No Idea and also Assembly Line UK if you order some stuff (or if you are a Fracture subscriber, because you got it free with this issue, you lucky fucking bastard!) *(MD)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA / www.noidearecords.com

V/A - "The Twominutmen 2" Dbl 7".
The second instalment of the series that has nothing to do with the MINUTEMEN save for the fact that the plan was formulated whilst listening to the MINUTEMEN's back catalog and oh, there's a D. Boon quote on the back cover - so there's a tip of the hat to the namesake. In reality it's based around bands playing songs that hit the sub two minute mark on the timing front, so you get four bands on each side of vinyl which makes for sixteen in total (simple math really). And it's a motley collection of twisted souls on display: I'M BEING GOOD, BILGE BUMP, MURDER OF ROSA LUXEMBURG, CAT ON FORM, MONTANA PETE, OLD TIME RELIJUN, JOEYFAT, CHARLOTTEFIELD, POPLAR, WOLF COLONEL amongst others, all cranking out and cranking up their own brands of noise, usually in the 'slightly-unhinged-but-defnitely-rocking' genre. The whole sub 120 seconds thing means it's a succinct spinner too, each band given just enough time to engrave their riffs before passing onto the next. And if you're still good with your simple math you'll have figured out that this comp lasts as long as an album too, but it's in a format that requires you to actually listen to the music instead of lazily letting it drift over your scrawny shoulder. All of this review's poorly constructed sentences, along with the gatefold sleeve, are reasons to buy this. *(RR)*
JONSON FAMILY, 14 Roma Road, Walthamstow, London E17 6HA, UK.

V/A - "This Is Rockabilly Clash" CD/ 35:25.
OK, so The CLASH are like my favourite band of all time, from the moment my father played *"Spanish Bombs"* I was hooked, spent so many of my teenage years listening to their records and was gutted I didn't lose my virginity to *"Train in vain"* instead of *"True"* by SPANDAU BALLET (great song though!). So it is with a very critical eye and ear that I approach this "tribute" compilation with Rockabilly and bluegrass bands tackling such classics as *"Know your rights"*, *"Jimmy Jazz"*, *"Bank robber"*, *"Capital radio"* and ten more. I guess it's kinda cool, the songs are stripped down, plenty of slappy double bass action and vocal crooning, I think most of the bands do a good job, respectful and not fucking around with the arrangements too much, yep, I'm into this and if you are a CLASH fan I don't think you'll be offended. Bands include LONG TALL TEXANS, THE PISTOLEERS, THE ACCELERATORS, FRANTIC FLINTSTONES, XX CORTEZ etc. I think THE FARRELL BROTHERS steal the show with cool versions of *"Career opportunities"* and *"Janie Jones"*. I like! *(DS)*
RAUCOUS, St. Annes House, 329 Clifton Drive South, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1LP, UK.

V/A - "Tiger Style Artist Sampler 2002-3" CD/ 78:38.
Over the last few issues of Fracture I've reviewed plenty of Tiger Style stuff without really thinking about the range of music the label puts out - so it's amazing to see it and hear it all at once. The diversity of these 17 tracks means this CD will never be anything but a sampler - from the all-out funk of JAMES CHANCE to the pacey garage rock of SPEEDKING and the fantastic electronica of the UK's WAUVENFOLD - there is something for everyone, and yet nothing anyone could like all at once. So, that aside, Tiger Style really are the cat's pajamas of stylish, diverse labels, with all tracks highlights of a genre, and personal favourites being those by HER SPACE HOLIDAY, IDA, 764-HERO, ALBUM LEAF and DEAD LOW TIDE. Lots to check out. *(HE)*
TIGER STYLE, 401 Broadway 26th Floor, New York, NY 10013, USA.

V/A - "To Be Continued" CD/ 51:03.
Pretty nifty little compilation here with some great bands. You get 20 songs on here mostly sticking to pop-punk / emo or fast hardcore. Well aside from BUZZKILL who obviously want to be THE HIVES or R.F.T. CRYPT. The whole thing is pretty solid with standouts for me coming from CARRY ON, DEAD INSIDE, FIG 4.0, NO WARNING and DC NINE. Great stuff. The problem I have with this compilation is that it doesn't seem to have a purpose. A lot of people are already familiar with these bands and I assume that most of it is already available or will be. Is this a benefit or what? The CD-Rom bit is quite good and has info on all the bands on the CD. The artwork is bog-standard and as much as I enjoyed listening to this CD I couldn't get past the question of why? There's countless compilations out there these days and most of them end up gathering dust in people's collections. This is decent don't get me wrong but it just doesn't standout even though the bands are pretty strong. I like to see compilations with a purpose or a message, not just a bunch of songs. *(FU)*
SITONMYFACE.

V/A - "Underground Screams" CD/ 73:08.
Huge comp of "unsigned" bands from all over the globe (mainly the USA though) from acoustic numbers to pop punk, straight-ahead punk rock and ska. The thing is, most of the 26 songs are killer tunes and this has been compiled with a lot of thought and by someone with taste. It's one hell of a feat that out of 26 "unknown" bands, there's barely a duff track on show, resulting in a highly enjoyable listening experience. If you love melodic punk rock, pop punk, tuneful guitar music, then there is gonna be something on here that rocks your socks. The inlay has lyrics and band contacts, you

never know, one of these acts could be your new favourite band. An amazing showcase of talent, bands I'd like to hear more by include : THE NATIONAL PASTIME, THE CRITICS, THE SWAYBACK, JAMES LESTE, THE DSC PROJECT, THE ARCADE VERSION, THE COMMON PLACE, DEAD LETTER DEPT. and SPLIT HABIT. *(DS)*
ASIAN MAN, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030, USA.

V/A - "Urla Dal Granducato" LP.
This comp showcases four bands from the early to mid 80's Pisa area of Italy. Which I presume was a political hardcore punk squat scene. The reason this LP now exists is to show what other bands screamed against oppression along with the bigger bands of the day such as RAW POWER, NEGAZIONE, CCM, I REFUSE IT etc. While there's no denying the urgency and anger of these bands the quality is raw for sure. Saying that, all bands have to start somewhere, except due to age, financial insecurity this was all these bands were able to produce. WARDOGS, who were on the BCT tape "Last White Christmas" are pretty sloppy and the track, a live one, that appeared on that comp is the best of their songs. The vocals are the best and do have that classic insane Italian styled vocals to a tee. SENZA STERZO are better, faster and come across a hell of a lot more brutal. They remind of the tapes I would have got when first got into tape trading years ago and loved wild insane music. They are kind of like DISORDER, raw, fast and pretty mad. AUSSCHLAG carry on from that. Fuck, they were a mad bunch. If you will very early DRI, RAW POWER styled hardcore at it's rawest. Most of their tracks are from the "Last White Christmas" tape and are easily my favourites. Imagine if they could have recorded these songs in a studio that would be a dream to hear. Despite the recording, which isn't that bad considering it's live they would give many a hardcore band a run for their money. Their two demo tracks hint of things to come. The LP ends with HOLOCAUST, who are the most tamest of the lot. They have a straightforward early 80's hardcore punk song, it's nothing to write home about. The whole comp sound wise is that of the early Bullshit detector comps. Probably a comp for those to complete their Italian hardcore collections and nothing else, but having said that I probably would have bought one if I saw it listed on a distro list. *(MH)*
LABEL?

V/A - "Wild News From Frenchy Radio Vol. 3" 7".
The Agenda : Six French Bands battling it out for Rock'n'Roll supremacy. The Verdict: Majority Rule, with sharp sounding shots from JAKES, STARSHIT, HOLY CURSE, WEAK and NITROBREW, but nil point to LITTLE GREEN FAIRY who I had this funny feeling (deep down inside) were going to be a let down. Nice cover shot of a beat up old Citron, couldn't tell you the model mind *(PC)*
LOLLIPOP.

V-PUNK - "Tora, Tora, Tora" CD/ 38:18.
German (I think) street-punk, very poor, very boring… very much frisbeed into the neighbours garden. Actually, it's hardly the worst thing I've had to listen to this issue and it has moments of OK-ness I suppose, but their cover of "My perfect cousin" (a fave song of mine) is truly awful. Basic, ploddy punk rock German style… fantastic. *(DS)*
DRAGON.

VANILLA POD - "Surrounded By Idiots" CD/ 33:02.
I have a lot of time for this band, this is their fourth album and their best yet. They have a formula and it's one that works, speedy and melodic punk rock with a heck of a lot of energy and drive. They have a knack of writing songs that are memorable and instantly likeable, they've not changed a whole lot since the first album, but they've just been improving disc after disc. You know what a new POD album is going to sound like before you play it, but that said, you are never prepared for the quality of rock-age they successfully deliver time after time after time. This album sounds great, the songs are superb and the icing on the cake has always been Rob's vocals, as far as I am concerned he is one of the best punk rock singers out there. He carries a lot of weighted emotion and controlled anger, but always delivered with a cheeky smile. Hell, they gotta be some of the coolest fellas out there in punk rock-ville anyway. I always look forward to hooking up with them. One embarrassing situation does spring to mind though, it was the Saturday night of an Out of Spite festival in Leeds, at the club afterwards they were playing a POD song and I was jumping around and dancing like a loon just inside the entrance, I looked across to the folks coming in and see Steve and Rob laughing as they come through the door… busted. But hey, forget my trip down bullshit memory lane, this band rule, this CD is more than great and I have nothing but admiration and respect for them for sticking it out for so long and improving time after time. I fucking love them, get this album and cheer your miserable self up a little. The most recent embarrassing situation was when my friend put them on here in Cambridge. I was doing the door but at the point where they said *"Thank you"* to me (I don't know why) had snuck off to the bar next door to talk to some breasts… sorry, a girl. Once again, busted by these Norfolk fruits! *(DS)*
DECK CHEESE, Ground Floor, 111 St. Pancras Way, London, NW1 0RD, UK.

VERMILLION - "Flattening Mountains and Creating Empires" CD/ 41:10.
Wow! I was biting my teeth with dread at the outrageously prog rock cover by Roger Dean, the British artist famous for record covers for prog rock bands likeYes. But with a quick flick through the sleeve I spied two hopeful things: a SWEEP t-shirt on a band member and a "recorded by Steve Albini" credit. But the prog rock cover was correct. In pictures it declares loudly, "In here is prog rock; if you like three chord three-minute pop songs, don't buy me!" I like this because prog rock is obviously enjoying a revival and that was due from the moment math rock made an appearance. VERMILION are on the border - what's the difference between prog rock and math rock anyway, except some punk spazzing out, and I'm sure RUSH did their share of that? At their more melodic moments VERMILION sound like all the math rock favourites - GASTR DEL SOL, STORM AND STRESS, JUNE OF 44. They have indulgent, heavy riffage, and on the best song, "Pachydermus" they play minutes of delectable, amazingly RACHEL'S like classical music before the guitar onslaught arrives. If you're ready for it, this CD rocks HARD!!! *(HE)*
REDWOOD, PO Box 6041, Fullerton, CA 92834-6041, USA.

VEXT - "A Childs Fascination With Ugliness" CD/12:27.
Hey, this is really interesting. Veering dramatically between harsh hardcore and blasts of rampaging punk, these Weymouth punks bring to mind the DEAD KENNEDYS, SUBHUMANS and SPAZZ - all at once! They're loose and sloppy, just the way we like it, and aren't afraid to use what abilities they have to create a sound that is most certainly their own. There's a dark, evil vibe to the artwork, lyrics and everything about this band that is intriguing and makes you want to find out more. VEXT, are you out there? We wanna see you. Twleve minutes of this kinda punk rock is just not enough. Comes back, we want more. *(JP)*
LABEL?

VIRUS.CON - "Jesus Was A Terrorist" CD / 16:42.
Four songs of electro-punk action. Sadly they seem to have not taken notice of the DHR scene of the late 90`s headed by ATARI TEENAGE RIOT and Co. which took this stuff into a new realm of madness. So this whole thing comes off sounding like an early 90`s industrial band who've just discovered samplers and drum machines. Very repetitive drum beats and not a lot else going on in the mix aside from the vocals. They need to check out the "competition" and then come back firing on all cylinders. I think they have the right idea but can't pull it off. I liked the pictures of the cats on the inside sleeve but that aside there was little on here for me. *(FU)*
BLACKRED, PO Box 53, Norwich, NR2 4WA, UK

VISA-NOIR - Self Titled CDEP/ 22:53.
Tremendously interesting jazz-punk with an equally interesting packaging job. It's like NO MEANS NO making very furious love to FUGAZI whilst cheating on them at the exact same moment with THE BIRTHDAY PARTY and an assortment of 80s bands both pop and punk and definitely including amongst the number BLACK FLAG, yet maintaining their relationship because of a mutual love of insane and intense bass-lines and time signature tomfoolery. A genuinely brilliant and original release that I can't stop listening to. Fucking A! *(DM)*
FLAMESHOVEL, 2322 W. Walton Ave, Chicago, Il 60622, USA

VISION TUNEL - Self Titled CD/ 42:19.
This Spanish post-hardcore is really worth checking out. Amazingly powerful, and apparently the lyrics are too. With songs like "11 de Septiembre" and "Marea Negra" there's definitely some politics going on. Occasionally haunting, the female vocals are sharp and metallic, and the guitars are melting and reverb from time to time. This is gonna be my learn Spanish project. *(HE)*
MALA RAZA.

VIVA KNIEVILS - "Promotional Copy * Not For Resale" CDS/ 9:29
What a completely fucking stupid name for a record, but whatever… if that's what you want to call it. Anyway, this band have a reputation locally for fucking people's equipment up (don't hold me to that, the internet told me)… so I heard the name long before their music. Which is just now. Anyway, this is just as I suspected - limp, badly produced "garage" rock'n'roll.. The singer says "wooo" a lot, like trying to impersonate THE HIVES or something, and they talk about how they're "gonna rock" a lot. If your idea of STATUS QUO on 45 appeals then, "woooaah yeah", this will indeed rock you. For oneself though, the "pub rock" circuit is not something that has ever appealed, and the VIVA KNIEVILS haven't really inspired a change of mind in that department. *(MD)*
TAFF POP.

VOLTAIRE - "Chocolate" CD/ 44:53.
This is a real surprise, you know those more chunky sounding mid-paced GREEN DAY songs with heavy riffola? Well these Polish guys (who have absolutely no discernable accents) have that cool sound down pat and produce some cracking songs on this enjoyable CD. To be honest, I would have never believed that these guys were Polish, the lyrics are well-written, so if they are using a second language then that is just mind-blowing, coupled with the American sounding singing, the humour and the strong production… bizarre, but perhaps I'm being condescending here and a little patronising. With the on-going unification and de-personalizing of Europe it should be no surprise that the music will all start to sound the same… American! This album also has trumpet and trombone breakdowns, from lounge core to Salsa, very strange, not really part of the songs, just tagged on the end or, just mid-song *"diversions"*. It does break things up, no denying that! There are a couple of tracks that do have a certain Eastern European folk slant to them, which makes for a nice change, as with 16 tracks of pretty much the same paced punk rock, it can be a long old listen. I like this though, in fact it's pretty damn smart. *(DS)*
ROCKERS, ul. Klimasa 46, 50-950 Wroclaw, Poland.

VON ZIPPERS, THE - The Crime is Now!" CD/ 35:23.
Oh Canada… loud and unruly Garage RocknRoll stomping from Calgary, and it ain't just the music that's rocking, because the VZ'S come up trumps in the lyrical department too. You see, unlike your typical Wild Drinking and Wilder Women formula that a majority of bands of this ilk conform to, THE VZ'S are riled and environmentally charged, definitely more on par with fellow countrymen DOA… *"The air's real hot, yeah it makes me cough, but it's rebate time and you bought us off. Everything's privatised and user fees will keep the less fortunate on their knees"* ("Little Black Heart)…. *"It seems like nature's best ain't good enough for a western world whose ways are stuck. Some envision dollar signs, while battle lines are drawn by others over test-tube crops planted in the dirt. Monsanto's in like a dirty shirt"* ("SGWTF")… you're getting the message, right. Excellent *(PC)*
ESTRUS.

WANDERING SOULS, THE - Self Titled CD/16:42.
Aided by a crisp, powerful production, this new Dutch post-hardcore troupe sound like a screamier version of AT THE DRIVE-IN and JR EWING fused with some more straight-up hardcore sounds. There's some fantastic anti-Iraq war lyrics and spoken segments and the whole CD generally shows a lot of promise. There's no real sense of originality or individuality but what they do do, they do well. *(JP)*
Jorick Émigré, Heemskerckstraat 22, 6828 ZG, Arnhem, The Netherlands.

WARSAWPACK - "Stocks and Bombs" CD/ 55:40.
An extremely workable fusion of funky Hip Hop, to a Rocking groove, with plenty of smooth Jazzy breaks from this Canadian crew, whose impassioned politics, and social critique, sticks like gum to the sidewalk. A ridiculous analogy, I know. My knowledge of this genre is limited, but I saw THE DISPOSABLE HEROES… many moons ago, and get a similar vibe from WARSAWPACK. Wordsmith and lyrical technician Lee Raback has his sights set firmly on mutated GM food, meat factory farming, the shallow world of designer label wearing consumerism, the futility of the War on Drugs, and of course there's plenty of smart ass comment on the War on Iraq - *"If enough aren't snuffed by Bombs and Guns, There's always sanctions. Look how bad that fucked the Iraqi's, Millions starved without a single missile launch"* (*"Wolfblitzer"*) - And now War is Over and guess what - people are still getting killed in Iraq everyday, the infrastructure is fucked, and Bush + Blair struggle to justify their actions. But none of those pesky Weapons of Mass Destruction will reveal themselves! Ever felt like you've been cheated? Not me Johnny, I was on to those idiots before the shit blew off. Anyways, bombastic CD this. *(PC)*
G7 WELCOMING COMMITTEE.

WATERDOWN - "The Files You Have On Me" CD / 46:49.
Words fail me in describing the turd that is this CD. Truly bad from beginning to end. Bad Hardcore

which is distinctive of recent releases on Victory Records and then swinging into some hilaious emo outing which left me cold. Another one of those bands that does the tough guy bit to prove that they're men and not "pussies" and then swing into some emo to show their emotional side. Now can anyone show me a band that pulls this stuff off? No thought not. Actually the vast majority of this is "emo". The singer truly is annoying and is the most dreadful part of this creation. On the song "Decaffeinated" the high notes are like some-one running their fingers down a blackboard and you can tell the guy thinks he really has some talent. Urgh. This release is further proven to be shite by the fact that they have an extensive thanks list which includes SUBWAY (great you eat shitty corporate food - cool) and their vocal coach (now that is punk), oh and they thank each other and their families about 300 times. Isn't that sweet? I have no time for passionless indie tripe masquerading as some sort of punk. Now where's the microwave. *(FU)*

VICTORY (ha ha ha you really are scraping the barrel)

WAVES / HELLBOUND - Split CD/ 25:22.

Japan and Canada united on this CD to inflict ear damage to all and sundry. First up is WAVES from Japan, who are a strange bunch to say the least. 3 songs, one of them sound's like THE EXPLOITED's "troops of tomorrow" song, but a bit heavier. Another has a more DISCHARGE type vibes going, then there's a TRIBES OF NEUROOT atmospheric and eerie type song - when I say song it's more like the sound of the elements. Interesting band to say the leas and will keep you tuned into their thing. But hey, HELLBOUND also share this CD and these Canadian's know how to make a great racket. Dual male/female vocals and a distinct crust sound, they could easily have been on Profane Existence during the 1990's. Just think of STATE OF FEAR, HIATUS, DOOM etc, and it's all done fantastically well. They do a superb ANTI-SYSTEM cover and politically anti-war inspired lyrics. *(MH)*

MCR COMPANY, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto, 624.0913, Japan.

WESTGATE - "A Fire" CD/ 24:42.

There's good news and there's bad news. I'll put you out of despair with the good news first. The song "Four Count Murder" is fucking incredible. It starts off nice slow and mellow, then bursts forth with a ferocious metallic fury. Quite breathtaking actually and ace lyrics to booth. The rest I have to say isn't as inspiring, more of a sedate LEATHERFACE and pretty mediocre at that. I've already listened to it a few times and felt my mind wandering only to return and think "oh, this CD is still on". Maybe 10 repeated plays would real you in, but am I convinced? If you like later period MAJORITY OF ONE or SPLIT LIP (or whatever the re-named themselves - I know it, but do you?), then this CD might just tickle your fancy. *(MH)*

JUMP / START, PO Box 10296, State College, PA 16805, USA.

WHISKEY & CO - Self Titled CD/ 22:42.

Okay, so this is nine tracks long but clocks in at about 1 or 2 minutes over your average EP, so call me confused already - is this an album, EP or CD single? (joke)... I know there's only one person that is going to be annoyed by my stupid introduction to this review, so I think I best move on, quick sharpish, haha... anyway, fuckers, this is members of BURNMAN and ASSHOLE PARADE playing some seriously fucked up metallic screamo. Only joking! It is indeed members of those bands, but this is stripped down "alt country" with a serious emphasis on the country. Now you just don't know what the fuck to believe, right? Heh. Seriously, this is a country record. The vocals are of the female persuasion, and really the only thing "punk" about this record is the lyrics (they take entire sections from "Start Today" by GORILLA BISCUITS - fucking genius!)... so is alt-country the new emo (or should that be nu emo?) now? I dunno man, I'm fucking lost... anyway, as I said, this isn't heavy, rocking country influenced punk, like THE ENABLERS or SOCIAL DISTORTION for example, this is seriously crystal clear (and very well recorded) proper country rock - like Dolly Parton with tattoo's! Not my first choice of listening material, I must say, but actually pretty enjoyable (nice solo's)... *(MD)*

NO IDEA.

WILLIAM - "Tints And Shades" CD/ 28:26.

This is how I'd imagine bands I've never ever heard like GLASSJAW and DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL to sound, though these are admittedly completely arbitrary guesses. What can I say? Other than that this really shouldn't have ended up in MY review pile. Without chugs, pickslides, a singer coughing his tonsils up, I don't have much of a point of reference. It's lightly strummed (and often acoustic) indie rock, with clean, sung vocals (and this dude can actually hold the notes) and a very relaxed approach altogether. That said, this isn't one of those sugar-coated MTV-darling emo bands with corny song titles. This is genuine, organic, and there is much drama and feeling entwined in the music and lyrics. Musically I guess it hints at SUEDE, SUGAR and maybe RADIOHEAD at their most mellow. I am unable to find a useful comparison for this guys voice though, and that's a compliment. Definitely a refreshing change from reviewing metal bands with names like xCONFESS TO CHRISTx. *(SM)*

IMPRESSION MUSIC, www.impressionmusic.com

WINEPRESS - "Complete Recordings" CD/ 32:08.

So this is a complete discology of all of WINEPRESS' recordings since they formed in 1992. It's pretty basic pop-punk and most of it was recorded at Sonic Iguana Studios by Mass Giorgini so the SCREECHING WEASEL references are inescapable and relevant because there's a definite SW feel to the music (especially the nursery-rhyme style guitar solos) and the vocal-melodies if not the actual vocals themselves which don't quite reach the snot-fuelled aggression of BEN WEASEL but are still pretty good. The band only existed for two years and this is a celebration of their short but eventful existence...it's nothing new, and some of the earlier stuff sounds a little too raw for my likings, but overall this is an interesting collection and definitely a lot of fun if SCREECHING WEASEL-esque pop-punk is your thing. *(DM)*

HARMLESS, W.Hood Avenue, Apt #2, Chicago, Il, USA.

WINNEBAGO DEAL - "Plata O Plomo" CD/ 17:48.

I head it from a buddy that this UK duo were a blast live, and I can verify that on this 7 song CD they've gotten smoke pouring out of my speakers too. Okay, there's only just so far a double-act can push their sound without it getting too generic, but WD overcome any limitations with a constant injection of super tasty riffing, and mean-as-fuck vocals. Evidently they've been getting a fair bit of 'press', and that's great for them I guess, but to put things in perspective, they played the tiny Free Butt in Brighton, as support band, and next thing they're booked as headliners at the 500+ Concorde2. Well that obviously didn't happen. And what's up with their record label... this disc arrived sans cover, track listing, jack-shit in other words. Really fine representation people! *(PC)*

FIERCE PANDA.

WINTER IN JUNE / STEEL RULES DIE - Split CD/ 21:25.

The front cover for this is ace. It has a leader (?), with a question mark on his face and an adoring crowd waiting to be told what to do. Sound familiar? Anyway going on the name etc I thought this was going to be some winy emo tosh, but I was proved wrong again - you can't judge a band by the amount of hair jell they wear - opps! I have to say that "A Mile A Minute" by S.R.D is fucking incredible; they take the best of SAMIAM and add their own twist - awesome song. They carry on with their with two more songs in a similar fashion, albeit a little harder. WINTER INJUNE are a heavy does of metallic screamo and they pretty much rule. Poetic lyrics from both bands, neat graphics and incredible tunes make this UK band really stand out from the crowd. It's great to see bands from Britain making good releases and this is no exception. *(MH)*

ENGINEER, 1 Chandos Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, UK

WIRELESS STORES, THE - "Historic Site Of Scenic Beauty #1" CD/ 20:06.

I think maybe I was a little too expectant of this release. The demo I heard earlier this year was a regular visitor to my CD deck, and having caught two cool-as-fuck live sets (Out Of Spite weekend and supporting The WEAKERTHANS) I was eagerly awaiting this first release proper. Don't get me wrong, this is top-notch stuff, driving and powerful one song, mellow and acoustic the next, strong vocals and some fine song writing to boot. A couple of songs from the aforementioned demo do make an appearance and maybe that's my one problem with this CD. With only six songs, and a couple of them familiar already, I'm thinking maybe this is just a little short of what I was hoping for. With the atmosphere produced on some of the songs, I think a well-constructed eleven song CD would have seen me lose myself in their sound for the best part of an hour. As it is, it's all over too quickly and just as I'm warming to the vibe, it's over. Main man Paul Yeadon has something very special on his hands here, I think they have both old school early 90s indie-rock appeal (SUGAR / MOVING TARGETS) and a contemporary "emo" pop-edge (CAPE CANVERAL / BEEZEWAX) that could see them garner a good fan base at a rapid pace. If you appreciate subtle melodies, clever song writing and heartfelt music, then this is maybe one for you. This is quite reserved overall, I think they can rock out more and I think they can mellow out a lot more, have more of the female vocals that appeared on the demo and really stretch their sound wide open, I'd like to see that happen as this is one band with the capabilities to produce an album that will be utterly mind-blowing. This is good stuff, and for a first release, well I can't really complain, I just thought the demo was better to be honest, maybe I just got my hopes up too high... tends to happen. But rest assured, this is nothing short of superb. Oh, just saw them play Rocktober and they were great with just acoustic guitar and Duncan (ANOTKTWR and SMP's) playing electric lead. A full length album from these guys is a mouth watering prospect... hope it comes soon. *(DS)*

IN AT THE DEEP END, 82 Barlow Drive South, Awsworth, NG16 2TD, UK.

YE WILES - "Smoothing Away The Horrors of Indigestion" CD/ 42:41.

This was a really nice break in the monotony of generic-idealess gufftasicity that I've had to review this issue. Something that is actually *different* and *unique*! That's right...these guys have done something strange that bands don't often seem to do anymore, which is, *develop their own sound*! I know, it's shocking in this day and age. Anyway, this is tremendously eclectic folk-ska-experimental-punkage from Tunbridge Wells that sounds like an odd mix of what can only be described as, a more metal CITIZEN FISH covering CARDIACS songs in the style of FUGAZI whilst on holiday in the countryside of Ireland. A brilliant band and a breath of fresh air to a scene that is growing way too stale. Take note from these guys, it's ok to do something exciting. (*DM)*

HOUSEHOLD NAME.

ZINC - "Old Mundo Punk!" CD/ 40:45.

Spanish melodic punk which runs along at a fair pace. No lyrics in English so I can't tell you what they are singing about, but I get the general impression that they're quite political. You also get a bunch of CD-Rom Tracks which I usually never look at, mainly as my computer crashes every time I try to open the damn things. I guess if you like Female vocals stand out really well and add something extra to this in my book. If you like melodic punk and don't want to buy from the labels which take you for a mug, this is worth tracking down. *(FU)*

SOULFORCE

Demo Reviews

#1 DEFENDER - "The Lana Lang Effect" CD-R/ 20:03.

Competent emo-sounding punk rock full of angst and power and all that good stuff. The songs are definitely there and the band seem very good at what they do if emo is your thing with harsher hardcore moments countering some lighter points and giving the songs a good sense of variation that never gets dull. Also these guys use a soundbite of the best line ever from GHOSTBUSTERS and thus win infinite brownie-points with me! Definitely worth a listen or three. *(DM)*

www.thedefenderfightson.co.uk

AGENCY, THE - "Demo" CD-R/ 13:11.

Heavy hardcore with ska breaks which is extremely well done and doesn't sound like a 4th rate CAPDOWN. The singer has got a strong and snotty voice, the horn section is powerful and the songs are varied and interest holding. Ska-punk bands are a little like black women to me, I'm not really into them, but every once in awhile one will come along which will make me re-evaluate that opinion. One of the best bands of their ilk to grace my stereo in many moons and right up there with ADEQUATE 7 and NO COMPLY. Surely destined to become much better known unless the ska-punk bubble bursts anytime soon. No offence lads, but fingers crossed for that one! *(DS)*

agency_band@yahoo.com

ALL ONE WORD - "Demo" CD-R/ 12:09.

This band feature ex-members of the much missed (by me anyway) INSIDE RIGHT. But this is a little more punked up, straight-forward and aggressive than that band. On this showing they have a very British sound, mixing up the styles BLOCKO and VANILLA POD to good effect. I think this is their first demo, it's a sterling effort and I like the style. The songs didn't remain in memory all that much, but that's not to say I didn't enjoy these four tracks, I like, but they're just missing that special "something" to tip them over the edge. I have a feeling that may come, as this is a strong foundation to build upon. One to watch out for methinks. *(DS)*

ADDRESS?

BLEED 13 - "Demo 2003" CD-R/ 19:12.
After listening to 25 CD#s of European rich-kid bands who's daddy paid for their equipment and "professional" recording, a scrappy, raw sounding demo CD-R might well go un-noticed. Luckily I am not distracted by whose guitar tone sounds best and who has the most expensive drum kit, so BLEED 13's scrappy little demo offering grabbed my attention straight away. Fast, tight and energetic, this little 6 track effort hints of a band with a lot of promise. Like a more pissed off IN THE CLEAR. I can imagine them being pretty awesome live if their set-list includes these tracks at all. Definitely keep your eyes open for these guys and drop them an email for a copy of the demo. *(SM)*
www.bleed13.com

COLNEL MUSTARD - "You've Only Gone and Pissed on My Chips" CD-R/ 24:19.
This is the kind of messy, tuneless garbage I usually give to that quality control-less fool David Stuart! Hang on.. Didn't DS love this band, then he put them on at an all-dayer recently, or something, in London - and I was there, and DS had to hide in the toilets because he had realised what a total abomination this band live was. Hahaha... DS, you're fucking busted mate!!! Musically, this is just chaos metal-ska with a tuneless singer... they have a Hammond organ as well. This band is a joke - isn't it? Maybe they should play some shows with UNIT, hahaha... duh. *(MD)*
32 Littleheath, Charlton, London, SE7 8HU, UK.

COOPER BROWN - "Broken Greedo + 3" CD-R/ 26:38.
Weighty and up-tempo indie rock, Christ, this reminds me in some bizarre way of very early OASIS, maybe it's the vocals, but I don't mean that to be a criticism! This is a four song sampler from their *"Friends with the president"* CD and on this evidence, that may be an album well worth checking out because these songs are impressive. Like a more commercial sounding version of The TAKE, and with the potential to make a name for themselves. *(DS)*
ADDRESS?

DUTCH OVEN - "From Me To You" Demo CD-R/ 12:56.
Competent pop punk, some good ideas and with a cracking guitar solo in "Slap in the face" that endeared me to them instantly! The vocals are a little reserved, but with a little more confidence they should come up to speed. These 3 songs are enjoyable, shame the production pretty much kills any power or dynamics, the overall sound is kinda flat and nothing jumps out at you. But, I believe with a little time these guys could come good. Hell, they may be there already, just not on this showing, but I like this and can envisage these songs on a higher plateau. Good stuff, keep at it guys... and more of those guitar breaks! *(DS)*
ADDRESS?

EYESORE - "Demo" CD-R/ 5:41.
A band from Singapore! That in itself got my attention. Plonk the CD in and wait for the results. What do you get? Full on grindcore not to dissimilar to what ASSUCK used to do! Not quite as deadly but great to hear a few people still going for the heads down no nonsense crusty grind. A surprisingly good production as well. Lyrics are pretty angry, which I suppose is a given in this field of music, but a good effort. The artwork is pretty naff which you *have* seen countless times before. The obligatory almost unreadable writing It's all here. I like this a lot. You know the drill. Fast, Ugly and Bad. For the fans of early 90`s DISRUPT era I guess. Get your dreads out! *(FU)*
ADDRESS?

FIREBRAND - "The Product Of A Wet Winter" CD-R/ 10:57.
Bouncy and melodic pop punk that needs a bit more practice and tightening up to really be effective, but this isn't bad for a first demo by any means. It's a little too basic and familiar for me, but they sound young and with a little more fire and a little less wimpy-ness they could be much improved. Not bad at all, just a little insipid on this showing. *(DS)*
ADDRESS?

GAMA BOMB - "The Survival Option" CD-R/ 5:21.
This is superb. The five people behind this must have a hilarious time as a band. They are you see stuck in heavy metal thrash circa 1987!! This is probably one of the funniest things I've heard in ages. If you were into the likes of PRIEST, SODOM etc then you will really get into this. This criminally short CD-R has been played far to many times in my car, only two tracks but total stormers. The vocals on `Zombie Kommand` are totally like Rob Halford, and gets me laughing every time. It shouldn't I know, and as a true metal warrior I should be permanently pissed off! As an old NUCLEAR ASSAULT and DESTRUCTION fan I can really get into this, if you are of a similar age and were also inclined to a dose of thrash metal in your youth you have to get your hands on this. It will get you smiling in no time. I want more! *(FU)*
ADDRESS?

KUNG FOO JOO - "Unorthodox Jews" CD-R/ 12:03.
This is well played hardcore that sort of reminds me of MINOR THREAT but with the modern sensibilities of GOOD RIDDANCE. It's hard and heavy, and very old-school hardcore, but at the same time, it has great melodic moments too and each song contained on this disc is a tune. Distinct and damn good. It's a real shame that they have now broken up, but I hear that their front-man Ali is to start a new band soon. I hope that the new band maintains the spirit and passion of this demo. *(DM)*
plasticmosh@hotmail.com

LAURA AUDIO - "Parked And Centred" CD-R/ 14:04.
While ¾'s of AND NONE OF THEM KNEW THEY WERE ROBOTS get their teeth stuck into the zombie thrash project SEND MORE PARAMEDICS, singer / guitarist Kevin McGonnell decided to embark upon his own project. These five songs are the early results, along with drummer Alvin and bassist / cello player Jennifer, they have come up with something very special indeed. Semi-acoustic and minimal, this is about as far removed from the SLAYER-esque thrash punk of SMP's as you could get. Laid back, mood-heavy indie rock, without any of the pretentious trappings this style can, more easily than not, fall into. I'm not going to try and come up with lazy comparisons, probably because for me, this is totally original in sound and style and a perfect vehicle for Kevin's excellent vocals and innovative guitar playing. *"Elizabethan mix"* sends a shiver down my spine, a fantastically moving song. This is one of the best demos I have ever heard without a doubt. *(DS)*
ADDRESS?

MORBO HATES HUMANS - "Demo #1" CD/ 13:48.
Cute little disgruntled Morbo on the front cover and three tracks called "Middle manager", "What happened to you?" and "Alcohol is not my friend" give an indication of the unhappy punches this demo is throwing. From Bournemouth, and possibly quite young, it's hard to imagine a girl is singing these deep, growelly words, but then the punk recording is a little bit shit. But there's hope. *(HE)*
ADDRESS?

POLAN - "An Introduction" CD-R/ 17:01.
Right that's it I'm hiring a fucking van and heading off to kill three individuals going under the name POLAN. Christ, it's almost like listening to RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS and that my friend is evil itself. This is seriously dreadful and I would not wish this on anyone. Made for MTV and little else. Please lads if I don't manage to get me van, shooter and you three, could you stop making music. *(FU)*
ADDRESS?

PONY COLLABORATION, THE - "Demo" CD-R/ 12:27.
Saw this band a few weeks ago and was very impressed with them, despite it being like only their second show or something. Lazy, alt-country meets Nick Drake type stuff, nice and mellow with good vocals - both male and female - and very English sounding vocally, in a genre where an American drawl is the norm. The instrumentation, despite residing in a minimal environment, is varied, with glockenspiel, keys and violin/cello enhancing the drum, bass and guitar mainstays. The songs are sweet, the lyrics are superb and the female vocals really add another dimension to the sound. The four songs on this disc seem to all revolve around a relationship breakdown/break-up and you believe the emotions that are being exposed. I am genuinely excited about this band, they have that certain something that makes a band stand-out and this disc has been played over and over. A really quite excellent demo. *(DS)*
www.theponycollaboration.com

SCRAPPY - Self Titled CD/ 08:38.
There's a bit of conflict going on for me here. On the one hand this is so bad it's punk. Like why should it matter that the recording is marginally more dreadful than the playing and lyrics, if the DIY spirit is alive and kicking? Georgina has a cool voice, and you never know what lurks around the corner for the young SCRAPPY - what a name! But then I'm upset by the SCRAPPY ARE UNSIGNED plea on the sleeve, because that's not v DIY, and the lyrics really are abysmal. Take "Public Skool Girl" (well don't take her...) where Georgina sings "You don't do drugs / You don't have fun / You just lie around getting done... up the arse". C'mon! Liz Phair was dirty but not like that. Tchk! (Meant to express ambiguity...) *(HE)*
ADDRESS?

STRIKE OF '59 - "Demo" CD-R/ 10:15.
I have no explanation for this, but I'm not a big fan of female vocals and I'm not generally a fan of ska-punk. But when you combine the two you have a recipe I'm quite partial to... DANCE HALL CRASHERS, NO COMPLY and now STRIKE OF '59 prove that point. The punk parts on this demo are pretty thrashy at times and fast, with Katya's vocals really pushing the songs along in an early TILT style. The ska stuff is frantic with everyone racing to the finish line, so it seems. "Years" is a cool song, a pacey little pop punker with a nice melody that sticks in your head. "L is for loser" has some nice '79 style ska breakdowns that work well, and on every level this demo is impressive, despite the band not liking it very much apparently. Katya also hangs out with some of my fave people, Matty Scuttle and JB, as well as the lovely Katie... what a fox, and no Katya, I hadn't realised how massive her breasts are!! Anyway, getting sidetracked here, I like this band, this demo is top notch and regardless of who is in the band or who they hang out with or how big their friends tits are... that's an honest opinion. Shit, I saw their very first gig a couple of years back and thought they had potential... they come good. There is a new demo recorded and apparently it leaves this one chewing dust. *(DS)*
ADDRESS?

TEGAN - "King Bull Counts the Counts" CD-R/ 11:48.
Very accomplished indie/emo rock here, strong songs, with a good feel and obvious musical talent. Very much in the same ballpark as the superb CAPE CANAVERAL and The WIRELESS STORES, with leashed meanderings, controlled power and a knack for writing memorable songs. The instrumental *"Let's play, OK?"* which ends this 3 track demo is nothing short of brilliant. With so many bands opting to play this style these days, it takes something special to stand out from the crowd and these guys do. One of the best demos I've heard this year without a doubt. I can see a few labels fighting over themselves to get this band signed and rightly so. *(DS)*
teganmusic@hotmail.com

TORINO 74 - "7 Track Demo" CD-R/ 21:58.
I thought these guys were long gone. Having seen them a few times and having enjoyed the first 7" from a couple of years ago, they seemed destined to be *"another"* Wakefield smash pop sensation. But they seemed to disappear and now they're back in the public eye with seven new songs. It's good stuff, melodic, rumbles along with sublime hooks and they manage to have elements of the earlier Crackle! Records sound, mixed with say GRAMPUS EIGHT's penchant for a nifty melody. As I say, good stuff all round, but this style has diminished in popularity somewhat of late. Bands such as BLOCKO and in particular MILLOY, have really moved the goalposts far off into the distance, making it a tough game for most other bands to play. I like this a lot, but I think it needs a little something else to make *it "special"*. A strong demo but I know these guys can improve upon this and release a killer CD - mark my words. *(DS)*
David Stringer, 30 Wauchope St. Wakefield, WF2 8DX, UK.

WILLOWZ, THE - "Demo" CD-R/ 5:24.
This is a strange one, a 2-track 3" CD in a badly copied sleeve, but on Poshboy Records??? Eh, what's going on there? If you didn't know, Poshboy was a Los Angeles punk label that released a plethora of classic records back in the 80s, from the Rodney On The Roq compilations to CH3, TSOL, BLACK FLAG, AGENT ORANGE, SOCIAL DISTORTION, etc. Forever stigmatised with a reputation of fucking bands over, the label has never reached the lofty heights of the early 80's, despite many attempts at re-launching itself. I thought it had long gone, but obviously not. The WILLOWS are pretty cool lo-fi 60's garage punk, kinda like a lite version of The HIVES with a GROOVIE GHOULIES vibe going on too. Not exactly earth-shattering and nothing I haven't heard before... better and worse, but enjoyable all the same. I actually like this a lot, especially *"Think Again"* which is a great song. Hey, just checked out the Poshboy website and found that there are brand new discography CD's from THE SIMPLETONES and THE STEPMOTHERS... how fucking cool is that? Oh wait, you probably think punk rock started with the first GORILLA BISCUITS record... whatever dude. *(DS)*
thewillowz.com

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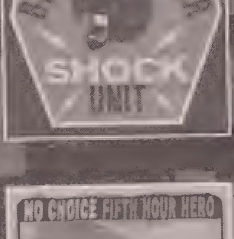

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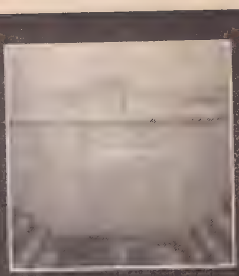

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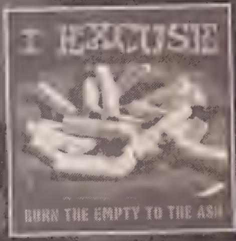
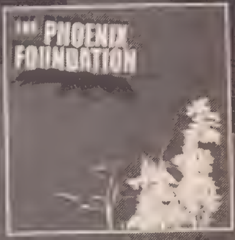


THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION
"These Days" CD

Finland has a reputation of giving birth to some great bands, and The Phoenix Foundation are no exception. Think bands like Husker Du, Leatherface, HDQ and Manifesto Jukebox. Wow!

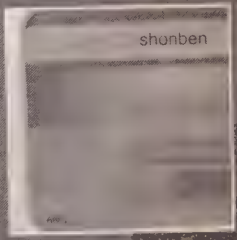
£7.50 post-paid United Kingdom.
12 Euro post-paid Ireland / Europe.



SHONBEN
"1999" CD

Shonben existed for one year, and feature Scott and Graeme from Broccoli. This release is a complete anthology of their really powerful, poppy Broccoli / Jawbreaker style punk. Just amazing.

£6.50 post-paid United Kingdom.
10 Euro post-paid Ireland / Europe.



NRA
"Machine" CD

Welcome to NRA's first album in three years, which might just also be their best album yet. Think Husker Du playing Ramones songs, with that classic NRA edge, and you got it! Brilliant.

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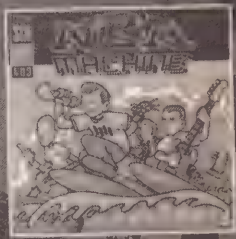

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"Dry River Fishing" CD

No Choice are one of the best punk rock bands in the UK. This record is up there with "Mush" and "Jettison"... It's the perfect political mix of Leatherface, Pegboy, Naked Raygun and more!

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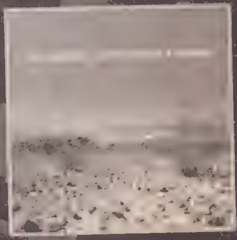

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ACROSS YOUR FACE #1/ 40 pages/ A5/ copied.

I totally dug this 'zine, as it's written with a passion of the editors belief in hardcore and music - unfortunately a lot of 'zines lack that initial ingredient. Inside you'll find interviews with FLATLINE, THE DEAL, SWORN IN, THE LAST CHANCE, DARKDAYRISING and 4 LIFE PROMOTIONS. All the interviews are excellent and a fine read. There's also a piece on sXe and phobias. Crisp clear-cut n paste make this zine a must. Do you need to know that one Mr Sean McKee does it? *(MH)*

Xschism_reignsx@yahoo.com

ARTCORE #19/ 52 pages/ A4/ Printed/ £1.50 plus SAE.

A lot of people see me as some kind of authority on 1980's US Hardcore music, yeah I know my shit... but I have nothing on Welly and his band of writers! They know their shit when it comes to old school US punk rock and hardcore. For me, the Vaultage section of this zine is utterly amazing. There are articles on the Canadian SUBHUMANS, TH' INBRED, The AVENGERS, The OFFENDERS (loved that band back in the day) and X-CLAIM Records (DYS, SSD, F.U.'s and JERRY'S KIDS - the best hardcore band ever in my book) These pieces are well researched and written with passion and love. They make for an incredible reading and learning experience. These pages are worth the cover price alone. But this isn't just a zine of nostalgia and past musical glories, the main bulk of this zine covers new bands and this time around there are chats with The EPOXIES, SHATTERHAND, The FREAKS UNION and the excellent STEEL RULES DIE. There's an extensive reviews section that pulls no punches and to top it all off the graphics kick ass. My friends, what you have here is one of the best fanzines you will ever read. Welly is the man responsible for getting Monk Dave into punk rock... you can love him or hate him for that I guess, but get this 'zine. *(DS)*

ARTCORE c/o 1 Aberdulais Road, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 2PH, UK.

ARTCORE #20/ 56 pages/ A4/ Printed/ £1.50 plus SAE.

Just making it in with literally hours to spare is the fantastic new issue of what is basically the best zine in the UK, Artcore. Haven't read this word for word yet but I can tell you it's of the usual high standard, that being a unique cross between old and new, including interviews with K-LINE, WASTED, MAD PARADE, STRUNG UP, DA SKYWALKERS and HOLIER THAN THOU? in the regular section of the zine, as well as pieces / interviews on and with DR. KNOW, FU'S, TERMINUS, STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, Smoke Seven Records, The Art of Brian Walsby and a great, unpublished interview, complete with unseen photographs, with BLACK FLAG (from 1983!) donated to Welly by a Welsh guy called Dave who interviewed them on March 4th of that year in Brixton, London - but never got around to making his own zine to put it in!!! Quite fucking incredible, I have to say. Essential, I think the word is. Together with all this you get the usual slew of "too honest for most labels" reviews and a page piece on the upcoming "Visual Vitriol" tour that Welly and Left of The Dial Magazine are setting up over here in the UK. It looks amazing... Another great issue of this very real, great looking punk rock fanzine. Not many of them around anymore. *(MD)*

ARTCORE c/o 1 Aberdulais Road, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 2PH, UK.

BALD CACTUS # 20/ 36 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p + postage.

Here we have another brilliant issue from Andy Cactus, where he continues unabated with his wit and humour. Inside you'll get interviews with ACTIVE SLAUGHTER (vegan animal rights nutters, ha, ha), KISMET HC, FIG 4.0 and ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER (a strange choice indeed). It's also full of reviews, sarcasm, columns and just a plain of love for DIY hardcore punk. Keeping the wheels of DIY turning. *(MH)*

c/o 145 - 149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK.

BOX, THE #3 / 32 pages/ A5/ copied/ SAE + 50p?

Wow - a real zine! I was so excited when I got this and avidly read the short, but not too short, interviews with bands like THE TAKE, K-LINE, THINK TANK, THE KILLEREST EXPRESSION as well as label bods like Russell Pigdog and Mark In at the Deep End. I was willing to forgive the lack of address (got from website), page printed upside down and irritating tendency to ask the same questions until I got to Rant-o-rama, a page-long rant about how women in rock can't play their instruments! I read this with flames coming out of my ears. So predictably it was followed by an entirely male bands review section and some gig reviews. Such a pity when a promising 'zine is ruined by someone with an opinion. Maybe next time! *(HE)*

Russell Arnold, 16 Swanmore road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 2TF, UK.

DEFIANT POSE #6 "The L.A. Punk Special"/ 76 Pages/ A5/ Copied/ £1.50 + SAE.

There have been a couple of books over recent years that have covered the Los Angeles punk scene. As good a read as they have been, the trouble with them has been their rose-tinted view of the late 70s "punk" scene - X, GERMS, WEIRDOS, GO GOS etc. and their absolute disdain for what happened to the music scene after "their" scene was infiltrated by the underground masses in the early 80s. The problem for me is that, as much as I like early LA punk rock, it's what came after that which I'm more interested in and as far as I'm concerned, some of the best punk rock/hardcore music that has ever been produced came out on LA in the early 80s. Bands like BLACK FLAG, TSOL, AGENT ORANGE, SOCIAL DISTORTION and a lot of other acts who you probably have never heard of, but meant the world to me as a teenager...STEPMOTHERS, THE JONESES, SIMPLETONES, THE CROWD, SHATTERED FAITH and the list goes on and on. Well, this issue of DEFIANT POSE covers the shit I loved, love and will always love. It's my youth, it's what I lived for and believed in. Basically this issue is written by a bunch of 30-somethings who should know better, but there is something about 80s US Hardcore that never leaves you, so many memories, songs that still sound great today and bands that influenced and still influence so many bands. Anyway, this jam-packed issue is a real mess of sloppy layouts, micro-text and badly reproduced photos and flyers... but that's its charm, it's covering music that was never meant to be accepted to the clean cut masses. These were scary times, Reagan in the Whitehouse, cold war tensions and the rise of Right Wing Christian government control... 1984 was coming. There are contributions from people who were there and information on almost every band you can think of from that golden era. If you have no interest in 1980s US punk rock/hardcore then this will be of little interest to you. But if you want to learn a little more about the area scene that pre-dates NO FX, BAD RELIGION, The OFFSPRING, ALL etc. then this is mandatory material. This is book quality literature in old school fanzine format. Absolutely brilliant and recommended for those who are willing to learn a little about what went before what we know now. Oh guys, I have that JONESES 7" - who wanted it? *(DS)*

INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL, PO Box 2544, London, NW6 3DF, UK.

EVERLONG #4/ 40 Pages/ A5/ Printed/ £1.00 + SAE.

Well written Bristol zine that covers a wide range of punk rock styles. This issue has interviews with The BUSINESS, ARGY BARGY, GARRISON, LIGHTYEAR, FIVE KNUCKLE and Mike Park of ASIAN MAN/The CHINKEES. Lots of live reviews of Bristol gigs and a healthy reviews section too. They know their stuff... Shane was in VICE SQUAD and did write the punk reviews for Record Collector magazine if I remember rightly. Layouts could do with being a little more adventurous, but this is a decent read. *(DS)*

Dave Lown c/o 7 Nicholas Lane, St. George, Bristol, BS5 8TY, UK.

FISHCOM COLLECTIVE #1/ 4 pages/ A5/ printed/ Free.

Little hardcore based newsletter, news, reviews and a couple of v. short interviews. Could grow to be something bigger, they are totally DIY and support "Alternative and non-commercial music in general". Back in those days before email, when letters were written and sent to one another, little things like this were passed around person to person, up and down the land, across the seas and so forth. Just about enough material for a regular poo session. *(DS)*

fishcom@pi.be

GAINING GROUND #1/ 52 pages/ A5/ copied/ 5 Euro ppd.

Hardcore fanzine with ONE UP, PANIC ATACK! And KNOW YOUR ENEMY interviewed. Editor seems clued up on these bands so they read well. Some reviews, a piece on "Why not liking BOLD is lame" which is amusing... I always liked BOLD, but not quite to this degree! Another piece on a Euro trip with FAIRFIGHT and a priceless piece entitled "Jaded with the core" which has the classic line - "I dare to say it (hardcore) can give me 10 times more energy than any drug can! (Although I've luckily never tried any "real" drugs)" - brilliant! Strong first issue for those who like their music drug-free, but not toned male torso-free. *(DS)*

Mirko Meerwaldt, Milletstraat 13-1, 1077 ZA Amsterdam, Netherlands.

HAGL 20 - Year Anniversary Issue/ 40 pages/ A4/ copied/ £1.00 + 54p SAE.

Pure punk rock, unashamedly so and what else would you expect from Trev? In-depth interviews with FRANKIE FLAME and OI POLLOI, less serious ones with TV SMITH and INTENSIVE CARE. Cut 'n' paste layouts, but easy on the eye, plenty of Trev-isms to keep you amused and entertained. CD and fanzine reviews, a history of HAGL 'zine along with the usual madness, strong opinions and "this IS punk" attitude. I'll leave the last word to the editor; "Hardcore is shit. Just a repetitive racket that goes on for fucking ever, with a singer barking like a fucking Jack Russell". Even if you don't agree with what Trev has to say (and you really shouldn't!), he's funny as fuck and that's what makes Have A Good Laugh do what it says on the box. *(DS)*

Trev c/o Rosehill, 20 New Front St. Tanfield Lea, Stanley, DH9 9LY, UK.

IN IT ON IT #15/ 24 Pages/ A5/ Copied/ £1.00 Plus SAE.

Typical punk rock read here, interviews with BLISTERHEAD, ASSERT, OXYMORON and... BUZZKILL! Reviews, little articles and rants... didn't really hold my attention, but after 15 issues I guess it does hold others. Not bad, just nothing in this issue for me. *(DS)*

Paul, The Flat, 56A Upgate, Louth, LN11 9JN, UK.

INCITE #1/ 24 Pages/ A5/ Copied/ Free.

This is a 'zine produced by the Manchester Anarchist Youth Collective (try saying that after a couple of beers!). Its totally free and has been produced to show that mass media etc do not control all of our lives. Full of news, views and contacts. *(GS)*

www.anarchistyouth.net

INCITE #2/ 24 Pages/ A5/ Copied/ £1.00 plus SAE.

Vibrant little 'zine covering anarchist ideals and opinions. If that's your trip then you may find this interesting, especially if you live in the Manchester area. Nothing bad to say about it, but just doesn't connect with me on any level whatsoever. When you buy petrol, smoke cigarettes, drink Coke Cola and pay taxes, the anarchist trip is a little contradictory to my lifestyle. Did I mention I work for the government too? That's punk rock, eh? *(DS)*

mancanarchistyouth@yahoo.co.uk

INFINITE MONKEY #4/ 32 pages/ A4/ copied/ no price listed.

I always like reading this zine. Usually I have never heard of the bands that Ewan features, but what the fuck - judging from what I've read in this zine he's only coming across bands that I've considered classics for over 15 years now - but hey that's the beauty of hardcore punk. Inside you get interviews with DRIVEN DOWN, FIG 4.0, ABSIDIA, KEVORKIAN SOLUTION and ARMY OF FLYING ROBOTS. Each interview is unique to the band in question, though doesn't always mean it's good though. My fave piece is the NEW TO ME section, where he just rambles on about new music that he's come across, well new to him. Then there are loads of reviews of music and zines. Great zine, so get it. *(MH)*

INFINITE MONKEY, 145-149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LT.

LUCIDITY #1/ 40 pages/ A5/ copied/ £1.00 & SAE.
Personal zine that actually has a piece on "personal zines" - how's that for being personal eh? This reads well, very well, after a couple of pages you start to like the writer and are interested in their next step… which is what personal zines should be about in my opinion. After all, it is one person and their view of all things… if they're an unfunny, dull asshole then you're not gonna stay tuned are you? Thoughts come across well, pretty much all the opinions put to print read true to me, which helps matters and after a couple of pages you're in there with the writer, taking a trip. The writing is broken up with pieces on Paganism and some Benjamin Zephaniah poetry… but these aren't random inclusions, they are there for a reason, as is explained. I really enjoyed this zine, if you like writing that is honest and from the heart through a free-thinking mind then you might too. *(DS)*
email@allofyourgodsaredead.com

MASS MOVEMENT #14/ 144 pages/ A5/ printed/ £2.50 ppd.
Fuck a sock! This is huge, basically three fanzines sold as one issue. Band-wise you get interviews with The PUNKLES, MIRRORMEN, BROKEN BONES, STALAG 13, AVAIL, DEATH BY STEREO and many, many more. One zine is the "Thrash metal special!" and has ANTHRAX, VIO-LENCE, NUCLEAR ASSAULT and SHADOWS FALL. There's also a "discussion panel" re-living the glory days of mid-80's thrash metal/cross-over which is an amusing read. "Where were you when you first heard "Reign In Blood?" - classic. There's some stuff on wrestling (yawn), a tirade against media entitled "Fuck the mainstream" and another piece called "Fuck the kids", which might be humorous, god knows what a "kid" would think if he/she picked up a copy of the zine and read it… run away maybe! This is a jam-packed read, hours of work has gone into producing this puppy and there's a wealth of information to be absorbed. To be frightfully honest, I didn't get a whole lot out of this, wasn't into the bands featured, not into thrash metal at all and the columns, as well as being a pain in the ass to read due to the layout, I found rather dull. In fact I didn't enjoy this at all, but that's just my personal opinion. In the value for money and dedicated commitment stakes… no one comes close to Tim and MASS MOVEMENT, this is an incredible body of work, I don't know how he does it, but we should all be glad that he does. Get this fanzine, no excuses. *(DS)*
12 West Street, Aberkenfig, Bridgend, CF32 9BB, UK.

MISHAP FUN PACK/ 90+ pages/ A5/ copied/ SAE + donation.
The Mishap fun pack includes Mishap #14 volumes 1 and 2 and the Mishap #14 step-child - that's two and a half zines wrapped in a Bosch-covered envelope for free or trade! And donations over two dollars to prisoner support. Ryan is "just a punk kid with a pen" and this is obviously his labour of love. He writes notebooks and has typed up thoughtful and intelligent musings on political issues, like the aftermath of September 11, local issues, like the criminalisation of the homeless in Eugene, personal issues like the tragic tale of his cat Crusty, and about country life in Oregon. There's lots of fiction in vol. 2, and reviews of records with a difference. Lots of zine and book reviews and excerpts. The step child has some "wouldn't fit" extras. This is all very cool. *(HE)*
Ryan, PO Box 5841, Eugene, OR 97405, USA.

MODERN ARIZONA #3/ 24 Pages/ A5/ Copied/ $2.00 ppd.
It may be small and over way too quickly, but this 'zine rules. No music, just political and socio-political thoughts and stories. Great piece about going to a Pro-War Rally with an anti-war banner and all the shit the guy gets. This is a funny, but also deadly serious read, freedom of speech? Only if you keep quiet about it. Anti-Bush sentiments throughout (including a little booklet on the lovely fella) and the writing remains captivating from start to finish. A personal 'zine with an intelligent political stance. Excellent. *(DS)*
PO Box 494, Brewster, NY, 10509, USA.

NEW SCHEME, THE #8/ 56 pages/ B4/ printed/ Free?
In the ever-declining world of zines, this one is almost typical - columns, interviews and reviews, laid out in an obvious unpersonal way. Maybe it's the paper type - the same as Fracture and all other free zines. It just seems so common. I think more and more there's a need for personal, unique zineage again. Stuart could do this. For me the highlight is his reviews section. I love the idea of a reviews section where everything is written by one person, giving this otherwise dreary zine a stronger edge. You know what Stuart likes, he describes it well, and so you know where you stand. If he likes it you know whether you will or won't too. Interviews are brief - including DENALI, MILEMARKER and JR EWING. The New Scheme is not bad but just needs to play on its personality a bit more. *(HE)*
New Scheme Industries, PO Box 19873, Boulder, CO 80308, USA.

OX #51/ 164 pages/ A5/ Printed/ 4.00 Euro + IRC's.
The OX converyor belt rolls out right on schedule another issue covering just about everything that's currently twitching in the punk rock, hardcore, rock'n'roll scene. The trouble is, with something this regular and so formalised, it becomes just a mass of words and images without the warmth and character needed to capture the reader's attention. The size of the interviews is sometimes half a page, which allows you no time to get anywhere into a decent discussion. I really had a hard time with this issue of OX - there was little I could chew on. OK, you get interviews with TURBO AC's, CRAMPS, EXPLOITED, JOE JACKSON, CAVE IN, CAPITOL CITY DUSTERS, a feature on the GUN CLUB, STEVE WYN of the DREAM SYNDICATE, EXCENE CERVENKA, BOY SETS FIRE, AFI, ELLIOT, LESBIAN LIPSTICK (you gotta be shittin' me?), The FEEDERZ, CRIME (Jesus, this issue should be an "old farts" issue!) plus loads more interviews, also with People Like You Records, Sub Pop. Oh and a guy named CRAZY WHITE SEAN, who has released a 7" but is also one of these new breed of people into mutilating their body on stage, Jim Rose, Jackass style - putting his pecker in a mouse trap and then setting it off, stapling pictures to his forehead kind of madness, oh and of course as any self respecting artist of this genre, eating his own doo doo.... as you do! Sean gauges a good show on certain criteria, like a recent one where 10 people fainted and 25 puked! This guy's antics was about the only thing that stuck out in my mind having perused OX, which is a pretty sad reflection of the content in this issue. Definitely a case of quantity over quality. *(TC)*
OX-Fanzine, Joachim Hiller, PO Box 10 22 25 Haan, Germany.

PERSONALITY LIBERATION FRONT #4/ 96 pages/ Price?
Unfortunately I lost the helpful note that came with this fabulous Australian 'zine that had useful information such as its price etc, but that's what happens when deadlines get put back and back and I have to carry my review piles halfway around the country and back again. Anyway, this is absolutely jam-packed with content and a free CD sampler from DEPLORABLE RECORDINGS on top of that! This has absolutely everything you'd want from a 'zine: reviews, columns, opinions, interviews, comments, politics, cartoons, art…everything. A fantastic and entertaining read that will last a long time and is stuffed with quality and a great CD. *(DM)*
Kylie c/o P.L.F, PO Box 3023, South Brisbane, BC Qld, 4101, Australia

REASON TO BELIEVE #8/ 88 Pages/ A4/ Printed/ FREE with big SAE.
You know, sometimes there are people and things in life that you may not like, but you respect. RTB zine has been one of those things. I think it's a fantastic zine, written by folks with knowledge, passion and love for what they cover. Unfortunately, for me, most of what they've covered in the past is of little interest to me, or is rather non-applicable to my life. Squats, riots, protests, anarchy… I can't relate to be honest. Maybe once I could, maybe I was just thinking it looked cool if I was into such rebellion after growing up in middle class white bread suburbia. But I digress, RTB is a much needed read in these days of apolitical, pro-fashion style "punk" ethics and I always read it, it doesn't tend to cheer me up, or excite me very much, but it does have the frequent ability to educate, inform and interest me. Three important factors in anyone's life I'd say. A lot of hard work goes into it and if you are into hardcore, politics and the real alternative culture then you'd be a fool to pass on it. This issue is my favourite yet by a long way, there's a really cool chat with Ian MacKaye that finds him in good spirits, I must say I enjoyed this, having met the man and talked with him, he is intelligent, funny and a realist. There are interviews with GERTRUDE, VITAMIN X, COALITION records, a piece on the Equadorian farmers fight against FTTA and best of all… this issue has a theme… SKATEBOARDING! No fashion spread, nu-age poseur bullshit, but real skaters of all ages giving their thoughts and stories on what skating means to them. The layout for this piece is a glorious mess of pics (skaters with combat boots on - old fucking school dude!), different fonts, backgrounds, wow, it's all over the shop and it's quite simply, absolutely amazing! I haven't skated in years, but many of the anecdotes and feelings are spot on with the skating environment I grew up with and this piece makes for a great read, like an old 80s skate punk zine. I've read reviews in a couple of zines slating the layout on this piece, what is the problem? I guess everyone wants everything nice, neat 'n' tidy these days, professional, slick, soulless… from the music to the magazines. Anyway, as usual there are reviews of bands I've never heard, heard of, want to hear and when I do find a name I am familiar with it's usually a good bet it'll be slated to death! The reviewer Carrie certainly has a grievance with the style of music that Firefly puts out… vicious swipes at KIDS NEAR WATER and OTHERWISE, I found it highly amusing, man I thought I was a bitch, but this chick's got some attitude and I like to see that. Leo's reviews, well, I don't know what drugs he's on, but I can't wait to try them. Fanzine reviews section is informative (important part of ALL zines for me - support and believe) and hey, you got a killer issue here. If I was a stinky punk rocker I might find the music featured a lot more interesting, but considering I don't give a fuck about idealistic politics in music and I have no interest in bands who sound like bands who sound like bands who sounded like bands from 1983… I do like this fanzine very much and this issue in particular. They are having monetary problems (too many nights spending the funds in the North Bar maybe??!!) so help 'em out by buying the comp CD they have put together. Just realised I don't have it… do as I say, not as I (don't) do. *(DS)*
REASON TO BELIEVE c/o 145 - 149 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1LJ, UK.

ROCTOBER #35/ 54 pages/ A4/ printed/ $4.00.
Lotsa print here to feed the grey matter on, and fill your head with useful crap like nutcase NARDWUAR taking SNOOP DOGG to task over serious issues, like The Muppets (cool) and a short interview with badass RUDY RAY MOORE, better know by the name DOLEMITE (...and fuckin' up Motherfuckers is my game, heheh) and there are cartoons, and a feature on WHO ARE CYBERPUNKS? Which is an okay read, and it's always fun to read rabid music freaks getting in to lather over Who Is, And Who is NOT of their chosen subject. The verdict on THROBBING GRISTLE was about right. I'll leave my story of the Boxing Day Party I went to with GENESIS P ORRIGE for another day. It was all quite bizarre. And so is the review section in ROCTOBER - these guys are in to some scary shit. In amongst all the Alternative platters, I found write ups on… SHOWADDYWADDY, and the piece-de-resistance, LEO SAYER!!!! Maniacs. You best e-mail them for international postal-paid rates. *(PC)*
editor@roctober.com

SHREDDING PAPER #16/ 108 pages/ A4/ printed/ No UK price.
Hmmm, this is usually like fifty pence short of a fiver to pick up in the store, that's fucked up, especially as this is just a glossy reviews mag with an average of seven reviews on each page! That's criminal. But, as a free read, this is quality informative stuff, lots of shit reviewed from 50s rockabilly/doo wop up to The WHITE STRIPES and everything in between, mostly indie/college rock and pop punk type stuff. To be honest, I tend to actually use SP as a research tool. If I hear of a band and feel somewhat clueless, I will flick through a couple of old issues of this rag and find an informative review to get some kind of idea. In fact, chances are, you'll read through this and find out a ton of stuff you didn't know, you'll read about bands you've never heard of but will in the future. The reviews

are good, they are seasoned veterans and if you didn't know, main man Mel was the guy who ran Shredder Records back in the day... early JAWBREAKER anyone? I never buy this in the UK as it's too expensive for what it is, but it is a quality magazine. Oh, this issue also has interviews with The EXPLODING HEARTS, MUMMY THE PEEPSHOW and David Gedge. *(DS)*

SHREDDING PAPER, PO Box 2271, San Rafael, CA 94912, USA.

SUBURBAN VOICE # 46 / A4 / 132 pages / $8.00 ppd.

This is Al Quints 20th Anniversary Issue! If you haven`t come across this zine yet and are a lover of Hardcore Punk where have you been? This only comes out about once a year these days but it really is worth the wait. This is up there with the best of them and Al does a cracking job keeping up to date on all things fast and in your face. This issue has interviews with BALANCE OF TERROR, CUT THE SHIT, HOLDING ON, RAMBO, VITAMIN X, THE PIST, AMDI PETERSENS ARME and Martin/CRUDOS. All the interviews are very well done and in themselves are worth the price of admission. It gets better though. As per usual you get some of the best music reviews out there and Al knows his stuff as good as anyone out there. There is also a good selection of columns and to keep things flowing some of the best photo`s you could wish for. There is also the "get in the pit" section with gig write ups which for once are interesting, mainly as Al has been watching the bands only you and I can dream of. This truly is an excellent read. Almost everyone I know that has come across it over the years will sing it`s praises. Al`s knowledge of hardcore which he has followed since the dawn of time is pretty much unmatched and really stands him head and shoulders above the rest. Sadly it doesn`t come with a compilation CD this time but that aside if you like zines with character and oodles of info you should be stuffing your dollar bills in an envelope already! *(TC)*

SUBURBAN VOICE, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903-2746, USA

SUSPECT DEVICE #40/ 44 pages/ A5/ printed/ £1.00 Plus SAE.

It's not really fair giving me SUSPECT DEVICE to review as it was a fanzine I used to contribute to in some volume from 1992 - 2000 and the guys behind it are some of my dearest friends (although I don't get to see them very often these days huh Tony?). I haven't got a bad thing to say about SD, it's a very honest zine, and although the majority of the writers are well over being halfway to 70... there's a positive charge and true love for music that outshines almost every other fanzine. This issue, although not one of the strongest in my opinion, is a fine read. You have different writers with different tastes in music, strong political views and interviews with JETS Vs. SHARKS, COLD BLUE SKY, The MINGERS, SICK ON THE BUSS and The LAST CHANCE. Ultra-clean layouts, tons to read and with a punk positive attitude. The next issue is the ten year special, I'm going to jump aboard once more for this and with the plans Tony has... it should be something pretty amazing. I have never seen a bad review of this zine, here's a reason for that ya know! A lot of people have told me that SD has lost a lot of it's charm since I stopped writing for it, that's embarrassing, but I kinda see the point to a degree. It's a lot more mature without my dumbass input, but Fracture pays better and I can't afford to write for free these days, money is my inspiration now and my fine words of wisdom don't come for free ya know? I jest, Tony is an inspiration and a dear friend who I miss dearly. His friendship has saved my life in the past, quite literally, and I feel bad about letting the communication slide. The fact that I am a drinking 'n' smoking party animal and Tony has always had the "edge" shows testament to the fact that true friendship goes beyond personal habits and vices. Shit, I wanna jump in my car and go visit him now... I think it's true to say that if I hadn't met Tony when I did, I would not be into punk rock still, I probably would've taken a sharp exit from existence too. I feel all sad and ungrateful now. Back in the day, when I was a fucked up, slut fucking, alcoholic motherfucker, this guy believed in me like a brother and I feel I've let him down. Sorry my friend. *(DS)*

SD PO Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW, UK.

THE DREAM IS NOT DEAD/ 48 pages/ A4/ copied

This is a rad zine from Holland. Posi sXe is the order of the day and the guy who does it is a pretty interesting guy. Inside you'll find excellent interviews with TEAR IT U, PANIC and MAX WARD. There's a load of great reviews of mainly fast core, when I was reading them I realised I had bought about 80% of them over the same period as they editor - so we've obviously got great taste in music. You also get columns on politics in h/c, sXe, along with more and a cool travel diary. Cut'n'pasted in an interesting and cool way, photocopied very well as the photos are clear as a bell. With that, this is one of the best zines I've read in ages, so I whole heartily recommend it. (*MH*)

J Deames, Rooseveltstraat 7a, 2321 BK Leiden, The Netherlands.

THOUGHTS #7/ 68 pages/ A4/ printed/ 2.00 Euro + IRC's.

Nice to see a smaller German zine doing the rounds. The layout is fairly standard with the usual columns, interviews, reviews & photos etc. An interesting talk with a guy Lennart who discusses the situation in Israel criticising the Palestinian leaders for not being able to stop the suicide attacks, where the families of suicide attackers are financially supported and treated like heroes. I've come across quite a few Germans with the same pro-Israel opinion, that Israel has the right to exist and therefore the right to defend itself. The base of this arguement is that it has been proven that the Jews peaceful existence in the Western world was condemned to failure, and as long as antisemitism continues around the world, then a Jewish state which offers them protection is an absolute necessity. I personally believe the Jewish settlers have been a major factor in upsetting any solid steps towards a more peaceful co-existance, thus pissing off the Palestinians to such an extent that result in the suicide attacks. However, few of Israel's neighbours officially recognise it's right to existance which obviously makes them a tad sensitive to any form of aggression. I read somewhere in the internet, a piece entitled (something like) "we need a Palestinian Ghandi", which is food for thought. Talking of Ghandi, there's a PROPAGHANDI interview!! As well as ones with STRIKE ANYWHERE (Buz Punker Bunker's favourite band!) US BOMBS, PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS and PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES. There's a piece on globalisation and anti-globalisation demonstrators, a load of zine reviews, an interveiw with Florian, a guy who runs a distro and drives all round Northern Germany to shows with his boxes of CD's & records - I see him regularly at shows here in Bremen! What else?... uh, lots and lots of music reviews. All in all a really nice production. *(TC)*

Benjamin Schlüter, Hinter der Mainte 1, 31039 Wallensdedt, Germany.

TOILET PAPER #4 and #5/ 40 pages (each)/ A5/ copied/ contact for price.

Intelligent, honest, very personal and personable fanzine. Writing with great passion and commendable openness, the editor draws you into her world through stories and poetry. There is a strong feminist and political slant, but done in a way not to alienate the male readership. Issue 4 has a big piece on KEVIN DEVINE including an in-depth interview and issue 5 has London's GERTRUDE. These are good pieces, but for me the musical content is secondary to the editor's own writing. What really knocked me for six was finding out that Alva is just 17 years of age... smart beyond her years. Hell, get this fanzine, it is quite simply incredible and inspirational, not just for girls, for anyone and everyone. One of the best zines around right now without a doubt, this is just an absolutely fantastic effort on every level. *(DS)*

alvad@web.de

TRUST #100 + #101/ lotsa pages respectively/ A4/ printed/ 2.00 Euro.

Issue 100.... what a fucking achievement if you ask me. For the last 17 years Dolf and a cast of thousands have hammered out a new Trust every 2 months. That said, this issue is just like any other, no big fanfare or bloated egos, just business as usual. Dolf managed to get a few of the ex contributors to say a few words about #100 - try this one from Tomasso (used to sing in EVERYTHING FALLS APART) on for size: "Flashback: NEGAZIONE, PORNO PATROL, DECLINO, Berlin, August 1984. Hardcore in full effect. 200 Italians in lumberjack shirts, bandanas and converse All-Starts have travelled here with the bands and stand behind them like a brick wall. Stagediving and slamdancing. Stop and go. Breaks. Maximum acceleration, radical deceleration. Have never again witnessed or seen anything better than this". Armin (X-Mist Records honcho) is somewhat sombre in stating that Trust now has absolutely nothing to do with what Trust was back then. He apparently came up with the name, a wordplay with a double meaning i.e. Trust as in the human quality, and trust as in a cartel. "Trust today stands neither for trust in a particlar scene nor for a coming together of various activists, but rather just another music magazine amongst many that finances itself through advertising and contains any old article about any old band". Hey, what about just saying congratulations? You also get, laid out on 2 pages, the first 50 covers which is optically really nice... kind of like a fanzine version of all the Dischord record sleeves!!! There's a really informative interview with Diff, of Luxembourg's PETROGRAD - he's been in the scene for ages and comes off as a really knowledgeable and intelligent person. Also LA PAR FORCE from Germany... I saw em supporting BOY SET FIRE last year, but didn't do anything for me, sounded (with their female singer) like a BETA MINUS MECHANIC copy, REVEREND BILLY AND THE CHURCH OF NON-STOP SHOPPING, CRAVING, CULT OF LUNA, ISOLATION YEARS (with the old drummer of ABHINANDA!!). Dolf interviews a woman who specialises in a type of body training called Pilates, plus the standard news, reviews, columns and photos. Issue #101 includes a write-up of the Trust #100 Festival, which was basically a gig in Bremen with PISTOL GRIP, CRAVING, LONELY KINGS, YOUTH BRIGADE & HOT WATER MUSIC. I was there also and t'was a merry evening indeed. A shame that, despite circa 600 punters, Dolf still made a loss. He asked all of the bands if they wouldn't mind lowering their takings, all accepted but for one... clue: begins with 'hot' and ends with 'music'! There's also the second part of the 2 pages exhibiting the remaining 50 issues of Trust. Interviews with MILEMARKER, SPEARHEAD, NORTH OF AMERICA, GOGOL BORDELLO, ARE WE ELECTRIC?, OXES, the dreadfully named COSTAS CAKEHOUSE - who I saw recently supporting YAPHETT KOTTO, but they came off like a DARKEST HOUR clone. Hats off to Trust, and long may she continue! *(TC)*

TRUST Verlag, Dolf Hermannstaedter, Postfach 28087 Bremen, Germany.

VILEGENERATION #9/ 24 pages/ copied/ 50p.

This is a great, entertaining read that's both interesting and silly at the same time in the tradition of all fine comedy cut and pastes. Not just that, but it actually has an open mind, not just praising punk, but interviewing comedian Richard Herring (whose recent TALKING COCK show was awesome) and metallers ORANGE GOBLIN amongst the punk rockery such as interviews with ANAL BEARD, ANTI-PRODUCT, THE CT'S PENIS 'zine, and others. Plus there's cartoons, random thoughts, and basically this is some good shit. Oh, and there's a poster inside too! *(DM)*

Vilegeneration, Caer Mynydd, Deniolen, Caernarfon, Gwynydd, LL55 3NF

WATER INTO BEER #5/ 64 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p or trade.

I always get this 'zine to review, which is great as I love it! This issue is not quite as mad as the earlier ones... but the humour is still there, just a little more refined. For example, in the "Giving up alcohol for a month" piece (of which the writer fails miserably!) the line "I stayed in Saturday night to dye my hair, basically coz there wasn't anything else to do" is written so matter-of-factly it had me in stitches. This issue has interviews with The (Fake) DEAD KENNEDYS, WEBSTER, ONE MAN STAND, MR. DOGG and a great one with Paul Di'anno (ex-IRON MAIDEN). There are scene reports from Finland and a night out in Sunderland, various articles on all sorts of topics, reviews, silliness and overall this is a fat old read. I didn't enjoy this as much as the previous two issues, but it's a wicked zine and worthy of your interest. Got a lot of time for these guys, this is fun. *(DS)*

Tim Livesey c/o 28 West Park Grove, Leeds, LS8 2DY, UK.

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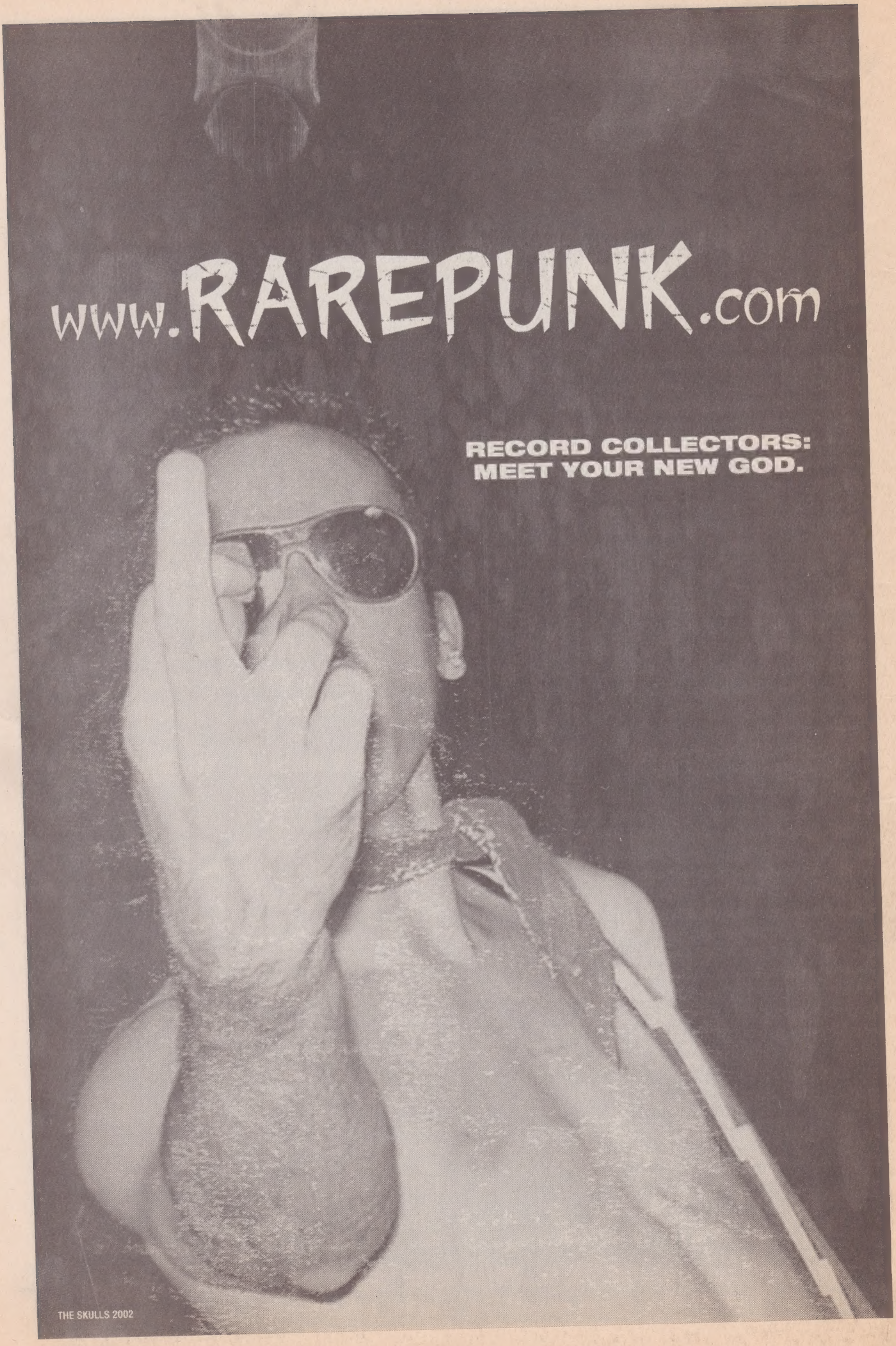
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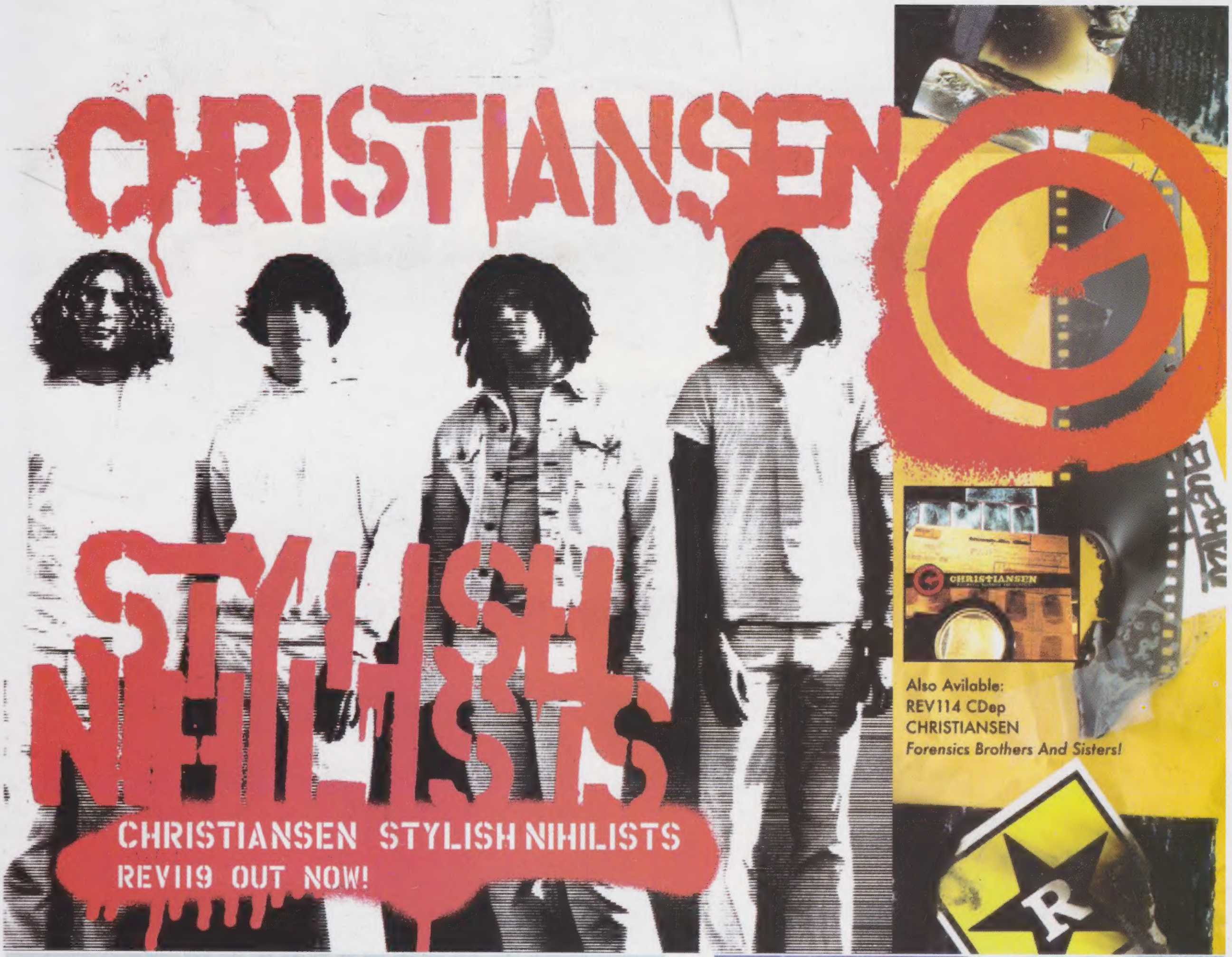
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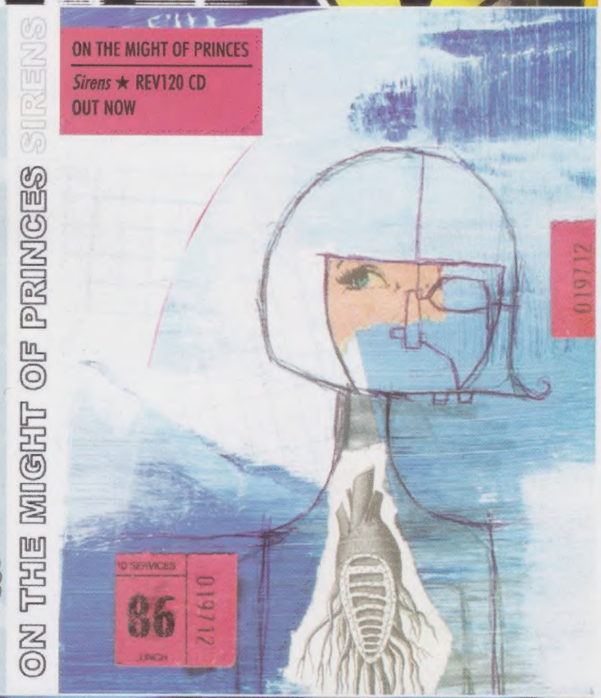
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